

# Something Different

by bethanytokitoki

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Summary: Sometimes, when tragedy strikes, it is hard to recover. It is even harder to do it alone. But no matter the pain or the devastation, there will always be people to help. Friends. Friends that bring the promise of something better. Something new. Something different. (Rise of the Brave Tangled Dragons AU)

## 1. Part One: Changes

**\*\*A/N:** Hey so this is the first chapter to my brainchild! The first part of this is the back story/ set up for Jack, Merida, Rapunzel, and Hiccup. It's going to be kind of long and there are some parts that are kind of graphic, especially for Jack and Merida. But part one is very important but it is going to be about 12 or so chapters before we get to Hogwarts. So I will try to update and write as much as I can to try and get there in a month or so! Check out my blog for updates and other stuff about the story: [.com](http://www.bethanytokitoki.com)**\*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer:** I am only doing this once and that is it. I do not own Rise of the Guardians, How to Train Your Dragon, Brave, Tangled, or Harry Potter.**\*\***

**\*\*And now without further adieuâ€¦|\*\***

~SOMETHING DIFFERENT~

(Part One)

\_chapter one\_

~(JACK)~

The moment that your life changes is something that you don't always notice when it happens. It can be very small and you wouldn't even spare it a second glance. However, for a little boy by the name of Jack, he realized that his life changed when his little sister was

born.

The 3 year old held his new baby sister in the hospital room with the help of his dad and his mother smiling at them from her hospital bed. Emma, that was what the name her, was so small and beautiful and had the cutest little freckle under her eye. Looking down at her, Jack felt the overwhelming urge to always protect her.

And he did just that, as they grew up he was always by her side. If she fell down, he would pick her up. If she ever wanted to play hopscotch, he would play with her. If she were ever picked on at the playground that was near their small house, he would be there to beat up the bullies and to give her a hug. He was always there for her and he was her knight in shimmering armor. He thought that nothing would ever separate them that they would always be together.

But when he was around 6 years old his life changed again, but this time it wasn't so noticeable. His parents acted different, especially around each other. His father came home later and was always grumpy at Jack's mom. His mother was always thirsty and acted silly a lot. She kept saying mean things to his dad and would yell at him. They didn't seem to want to be near each other either. His dad would sleep on the couch and his mom slept in their room alone. It wasn't long before his mom and dad had a big fight. His dad said something about Emma not even being his and his mom yelled at him for always spending money on other women. His mom threw things across the room and his dad yelling at the top of his lungs. Jack hated it, he and Emma were huddled in the kitchen and he was comforting her. Jack didn't understand any of it. Parents were supposed to love each other. Is this what love was like or was it hate? Jack wished that they would stop and go back to normal. Eventually it did stop when his dad left and didn't come back. His mom cried a lot after that and was angry for a long time. Jack would ask her she was mad at him and Emma. But she would just give him one of her rare smiles and stroked his hair.

"I could never be mad at you, you're my precious babies." She would tell him.

She worked a lot and they had to move to a smaller apartment but they were together and he had Emma with him. His mother would come home late and be very tired but she still tucked them into bed when she could. Most nights it would be just Jack and Emma though. Jack knew that his mother tried to be there and that she was working hard every night so that they had food but it was hard being alone. He doesn't ever get to be a kid anymore. He has to look out for his sister and make sure that the house is clean and make food for Emma and him. He was starting to wish things could go back to normal, when his parents were together and his sister didn't ask where her mother was and he had to lie to her because honestly, he didn't know.

It was a year after his dad left and he just turned 7 that he noticed the change in his mother. She still worked a lot but there was something off about her. When she came home she cried a lot and would drink a lot. A lot of the times when she came home she was already drunk and angry. Sometimes she would throw things and once she grabbed Jack by the shoulders and pushed him into the wall. Emma would be asleep by the time she came home (and Jack thanked God that she was a heavy sleeper) so Jack was the only one who would see their mother like this but Jack found himself being almost afraid of his

mother. She was no longer the caring woman she used to be. She hardly ever smiled or gave any affection to Emma. She never told Jack she loved him or comforted Emma when she cried. She seemed hollow, like she had just given up.

One night when he was 8, Jack woke up and found his mother on the kitchen floor after she had gotten home from work. He had fallen asleep while tucking Emma in and was awakened by a thud. He went to the kitchen and found that it was his mother after she fell to the ground. He found a knife on the counter and saw that her wrists were bleeding. He called 911 like people do on the cop shows he would watch and then he tried to wake his mother up and stop the bleeding. Jack wanted to think that someone had done this to her or that she was still alive, but he knew that she had done this to herself and that she probably would not wake up. Jack had grown up a lot over the past year and learned that life isn't all that great. He knew that his mother drank beer and not special juice, as he used to call it, he knew that she was with a lot of men for money, he knew that she thought of Jack and Emma as baggage that always got in the way (she told him in a drunken rant), and he knew that she wanted to be rid of this life and to get away. What he didn't know was that she meant to kill herself. The one night he went to bed before she came home and it was a night she found herself alone and sad and she saw a chance to end it all and she took it.

The paramedics arrived ten minutes after Jack called. One of them gently pulled Jack away while the other felt for a pulse. He gave the other a small shake of the head. Jack knew that this meant that his mother was dead. He sank to his knees and stared at his mother. His mom. He couldn't cry but he felt an overwhelming feeling of dread, like this wasn't the worst that would happen. But Jack was surprised that he felt a small sense of relief, how terrible is that? His mom was dead and he felt relieved. Jack felt someone wrap their arms around him and rub his arm soothingly. He knew that the paramedic was trying to help him but he didn't need it.

\_ 'Why aren't they doing everything to help my mom?' \_ Jack thought.  
\_ 'I'm going to be okay but what if my mom can still be saved? How am I gonna tell Emma?' \_

He knew that he had to go tell her, he didn't want to though. Jack would've preferred to let Emma sleep and stay on that realm of dreams and let her sleep through this madness forever. But he knew that couldn't be.

Jack knew that he just had to do it fast, like a Band-Aid. Just rip it off and then let the pain come. But as he stirred her from her sleep he found himself unable to do it. Jack knew that it was his job as her older brother to tell her that their mother had died but it was like there was something stuck in his throat that wouldn't go away no matter how many times he swallowed.

Emma had woken up and Jack was still unable to speak. He was battling with himself on the inside. Trying to get himself to tell her but also trying to talk himself out of it or find a different way of telling her.

\_ 'I can't just show Emma mom. That would just be too much for her to take, it was too much for me to take.' \_ Jack didn't know what to do and it was then that even though for the past year and a half she

wasn't the best mother, Jack needed his mom. He needed his mom to explain to Emma that she was dead.

That was how he ended up telling her. With tears falling from his eyes, Jack told Emma that their mother was dead.

Emma, of course, cried very hard. She clung to Jack and he carried her into the main room of their apartment where one of the paramedics was waiting. Jack took Emma to the couch and cradled her as they both cried.

Perhaps 20 minutes later Jack felt a hand on his shoulder. He looks up and sees a middle aged blonde woman in a gray suit smiling gently to him.

"Hello." She said to Jack gently "My name is Mary Garnish, what's yours?"

Jack could tell that she was a social worker and that she was trying to help them but Jack felt bitter about everything that had happened so he just looked back at Emma and stayed quiet. Very mature of him isn't it?

"Honey," She said gently "I'm trying to help you and I can't do that unless you let me. Just give me your names please."

Jack felt bad now, she was just doing her job and she was being really nice. It wasn't her fault that his mom died.

"I'm Jack." He informed Mary "This is Emma." Jack kept the introductions short, as he couldn't trust his voice to not break and not to start crying again. He didn't want to cry anymore, it took up too much energy and he was tired

"And what about your last name?" Mary pushed gently.

Jack paused here, not because he was hesitant on actually giving her their last name. It was actually choosing which name to give her: his mother's or his father's. His mother had gone back to using her maiden name but Jack had been still using his father's family name. His father may have left them but he was still Jack's father and the name was the only thing that Jack had of him.

"Frost." Jack decided, "Our last name is Frost."

"All right Jack," Mary said as she wrote down their names on the clipboard she was carrying, "I need you and your sister to come with me."

"Where are we going?" Jack inquired hesitantly.

"You don't need to worry about that right now. Do you think you can gather up some of your and your sister's things and put them in these backpacks?" Mary handed Jack said backpacks, both similar in size. Jack didn't want to leave Emma with this stranger even though she was relatively nice. He had a feeling that something was going to change and that it wasn't for the better.

But he left for their room anyway and got together as much of their things that he could. He packed clothes first and then with what

other space he fit in things that had sentimental value. He made sure to pack Emma's teddy bear and her favorite picture book, The Man in the Moon. On his way out he saw out of the corner of his eye he saw something taped to the wall. It was a picture of his family before everything happened. Before his parents started fighting and before his dad had left. Before his mom went down hill and before Jack grew up. It was taken in front of their old house and it was when Jack was 4 and Emma was 1. It was Easter and they had just finished the hunt. Jack found a lot of eggs but he gave some to Emma. It was a good day and that is why Jack kept this picture. Jack folded it and put in the front pocket of Emma's backpack as he made the short trip to the front door.

Waiting there was Emma holding the hand of Mary Garnish, eyes shrink rapped in tears and sniffing her nose. Jack walked over to her and handed her the backpack with her things in it and took Emma's hand as he let Mary lead them out. As they were exiting, Jack gave one last look at the apartment. It was really small now that Jack thought. He wasn't going to miss it, that's for sure, but this \_is \_where they lived for almost two years. He couldn't just forget it and he probably never will. They ate breakfast at the tiny table and Jack and Emma would watch cartoons on the couch. And their mother died in the kitchen.

No, he would never be able to forget this place.

In the parking lot outside their apartment a police officer was talking to the landlord and another one was talking to another man in a gray suit. \_'Another social worker?' \_Jack thought that was strange that they needed two to take Jack and Emma where ever they were going. He felt Emma squeeze his hand and he look down at her. She was crying again and looking at something ahead. Jack looked to where her gaze was and saw the ambulance that their mother was in driving away.

The silence was broken by the other social worker coming over.

"Are you ready?" He asked Mary.

"I suppose." She answered him resentfully. "I always hate when this has to happen."

'\_What are they talking about?' \_Jack thought as he looked up between them inquisitively.

"There is no other way, Mary." The man said regretfully.

"I know, Tim, I know." Mary then looked down at Jack and crouched to his level, "Jack," She started slowly and put a hand on his shoulder, "There's no good way to tell you this and I don't want to baby you, so I'm just going to tell you."

"W-what?" Jack said nervously, not liking where this was going and wondering if this day could get any worse.

Mary sighed, "You and Emma can't stay together. Emma is coming with me and you need to go with Mr. Tim."

Apparently this day \_could\_ get worse, much, much worse.

"What?! No!" Jack exclaimed. '\_This can't be happening!' \_he frantically thought \_'I gotta stay with her! I've always been with Emma!'\_

"Jack," the guy, "Mr. Tim", said trying to calm him. "Please don't make this difficult. I wish there was a way that you could stay together, but there isn't."

"Jack you need to let Emma go now, you can say your goodbyes and then we need to get going." Mary put her hand on Jack's shoulder but he flinched away and pulled Emma close to him.

"No! I'm not gonna let you take her!" Jack screamed at her, beyond upset.

"Jack?" Emma asked, "What's happening? I'm scared."

Jack looked down at her, "It's alright Emma, nothing is gonna happen," He tried to stay calm but he saw Tim coming close to them, "NO! Get away!" He then took Emma's hand and ran away from the adults. But they didn't get far as Tim ran after them and caught up with his long legs. He grabbed Jack from around the waist and pulled him up into the air, causing Jack and Emma to lose grip of their hands. Jack fought to get free, kicking and screaming. He saw Mary go to Emma and hold her in place as Emma tried to chase after Jack and Tim. As Jack's suppressor walked away Jack turned around in his grip and looked over his shoulder at Emma, still trying to climb out of the grip.

"EMMA!" Jack screamed in desperation to her, pleading to God to let this not be happening. Pleading that he may get free or stay with her forever.

"JACK!" Emma tried to get out of Mary's grip on her right arm as she reached out her left arm to Jack, crying her eyes out, "Don't leave me!"

Jack fought harder and harder to get to her, but it was too late. He was pushed into the backseat of the police car that was to take him away and the door was shut behind him before he could scramble out. Jack screamed and screamed to be let out but to know avail.

"Emma!" '\_LET ME OUT!' \_Jack thought frenzied \_'I can't leave her! I CAN'T!' \_But as he banged on the back windshield the car started to drive away. Jack saw Emma being carried into the other police car and then the car he was in pulled out of the apartment complex and turned a corner and he couldn't see her any more. For the first time since she was born, Jack left Emma all alone.

Jack turned around in his seat, stunned at what had happened today. \_'Is this it? I'm never gonna see her again?' \_Jack couldn't take it. He let out a breath, then another, and then another. Pretty soon his breaths got frantic. Jack put his head in his hands \_'This can't be happening. I don't have anyone? No family and no home? No Emma?'\_

That was when he lost it. Jack let out a great, wrenching sob and wept.

~(To Be Continued)~

**\*\*I'll update in a few days but tell me what you think and check out my blog!\*\***

**\*\*~Bethany\*\***

## 2. Part One: Longing

**\*\*A/N Hey! I would just like to say thank you all for reading this story! It means a lot to me! This chapter is pretty short; it's about two pages long while the last one was around 6. That does not mean that this isn't an important chapter but it does mean that after posting this I will probably post the next chapter in about two or three days! All right so that is pretty much all I have to say. Please enjoy this baby of a chapter!\*\***

~SOMETHING DIFFERENT~

Part One

\_chapter 2\_

~(JACK)~

Jack hated it at the foster home. He hated the other boys, he hated how cramped it was, he hated the sucky food, and he hated the "parents". After he had been taken away by the social worker he was placed into the "gentle" and "loving" care of Mr. and Mrs. Grumashirm on their farm in The Middle of Nowhere, New Jersey with around seven other guys, all varying in age ranges. Most of the other guys had been there a little longer then Jack had so they saw him as the newbie and therefore the one pick on. One of their favorite games was to hide his shoes from him and then chase after him with sticks until he found them. Sometimes he found them relatively quickly, other days it took him much longer to find them and by the end of the running around his feet were all cut up by twigs or small rocks. The other guys would also play some pretty mean pranks on him. One time when Jack was asleep, they honey in his hair and he had to chop of large sections of his hair to get rid of it. Other time Jack was locked in the barn with the crazy bull that would attack anything it saw. Jack had to climb up into the rafters to avoid it. The pranks and cruelty from them had gone on for the few months Jack had been staying there, but after a few more tricks, Jack turned the tables on them and started playing pranks on them. His pranks outranked theirs by far and they called a truce. They still argued and fought but they weren't causing physical harm to each other any more, and that was how Jack liked it.

The one thing that Jack and the other boys agreed on was that their caretakers were absolutely horrid people. Mr. Grumashirm had a rotund figure and dark, greasy hair and often smelt of spoiled milk and feet. He would give the boys jobs around the farm and without any help from him and the boys would come back to the house exhausted from either fixing the barn, hoeing the fields, mucking out stables, or any other grueling job that Mr. Grumashirm could think of. If one of the boys had messed up on something, however, they wouldn't get any dinner. It has occurred more often then you would think. Jack came to the conclusion that he and the other guys didn't even do anything, the Grumashirm's just wanted more food for themselves and this was

their excuse. Not like Jack really cared whenever it happened to him, the food that they got was so bad. It was like it was almost meant to be sucky.

Mrs. Grumashirm was even larger then her husband and just as crude. If there were an issue about anything she would resort to yelling at one of them boys, even if it weren't their fault. Her face would go red and it would've been funny if not for the common threat of being beaten with the wooden spoon that hang on the kitchen wall. If she was angry enough she would give them multiple whacks with it and boy did she have a swing. Jack never underestimated the power of the spoon any more; he's seen what it could do.

The worst part about Jacks situation, however, was not the mean kids, the sucky meal plan, or the aggressive adults. It was that Jack hadn't seen Emma for months. They weren't allowed to send each other letters because it broke some sort of code, not like Jack cared all that much about that. He just wanted to be with her and to see her beautiful smile again. Jack had barely managed to get his social worker to let him where Emma was staying and all he could tell Jack was that she was in New York City. It did nothing to comfort him and just made him more anxious to be with her.

Jack knew that he would probably never see her again unless he got out of this place. He just needed to find out how he would get away so that no one would notice and how he would get all the way to New York. He came up with a plan that he decided would be his best option. Jack waited till Sunday night after the football game that Mr. Grumashirm watched and got drunk to, falling into a very deep slumber. This was also the night that Mrs. Grumashirm made her monthly trip to visit he sister in Maryland. Jack waited till all the boys were asleep and got his things together, everything that hadn't been ruined by the other boys when they pranked him. Jack made his way down the stairs and into the kitchen where he got together some food.

Next came the stupid part. Jack went into the living room where they kept the hidden safe. Jack had found it of course, it wasn't even all that hard to find even. Just behind a panel in the wall was the safe that the Grumashirm's kept their money because they didn't believe in banks. It wasn't even a safe really now that Jack thought about it, it was more like a lock box that could easily be picked. The hard part was to make sure that he didn't wake Mr. Grumashirm as he removed the wall panel and picked the lock. It was a slow process, but Jack knew that that was the only way to do it. When he opened the lock he took out two hundred dollars and slowly placed the panel on the wall again and made his way out.

Jack snuck out onto the porch and looked around at the farm. He was so not going to miss this place, he wanted to forget all about it and never come back. So that was what he did. He jumped off the porch and sprinted to the road and made his way to the nearest town, four miles away. When he got there he got on the next Grey Hound bus to New York and slept. He dreamt of being in a better place and of being in the city where he has heard that dreams come true. He dreamt of Emma and it was a good sleep.

~(TO BE CONTINUED)~

\*\*A/N See I told you it was short but it did have some things that



were needed. Okay awesome! Please don't be shy and review! Even if you don't have an account, I want to know what everyone thinks! I love anything I get from my readers! \*\*\_\*\*Everythingâ€|\*\*\_

\*\*I love you guys!\*\*

### 3. Part One: Searching

\*\*A/N Alright so I'm not that satisfied with this chapter. It's fine and everything, it just feels a little rushed to me. I'm working on slowing things down because I'm gonna need that for future chapters but this chapter happened before that decision so to me it feels kind of rushed. Okay well I'm do with that rant now. You all are probably going to want to kill me after this chapter but just remember without me you will never get the next chapter! HAHAAHAHA! I'm going to be working on it every chance I get this coming week so next Sunday you will have a new chapter! Basically just expect a new chapter every Sunday unless told other wise on the tumblr blog. All right I think I'm done with my rambles now! On to the story!\*\*

~SOMETHING DIFFERENT~

Part One

\_chapter 3\_

~(JACK)~

Things weren't exactly going the way Jack had originally thought they would be when he first arrived in New York. Firstly, Jack didn't know how ridiculously big this city was. There were millions and millions of people here; Jack's never even been in a room that has more then a hundred people! Secondly, Jack originally thought that once he got to New York he would be able to find Emma in a matter of weeks or no longer then about two months. But it's been about a year and half and still no sign of her.

Jack's searched every chance he has had for her. He would go down any ally; look in any neighborhood; he even tore out the page of a phone book for the foster homes. Nothing. There was absolutely no sign of her anywhere, so far. Jack had to kept positive even though it was really hard to be and really easy to be pessimistic.

"I still haven't checked everywhere." Jack would tell himself, "There are still a bunch of places that she could be."

Jack was determined that they would be together again, no matter how unrealistic it may be. Jack couldn't live without her and these past two and a half years have almost been the death of him, especially in New York.

New York wasn't some magical place where all your dreams came true like they make it sound in the old songs and movies. At least for Jack it wasn't. Everyday Jack worked his butt off to get food. He tried not to go to soup kitchens to often because he didn't want the volunteers to get familiar with him. He knew that if they got to know who he is and they saw he didn't have any parents they would turn him in. Jack understood that they would believe that they would be helping him, but they wouldn't be.

So Jack only went when he didn't get much money from his "job". Jack's "job" consisted of him going to Times Square and going up to tourists and offering to take pictures of them for 1 dollar each. 7 times out of 10 he would either be turned down or they would avoid making eye contact with the scrawny, dirty, beggar kid. But after a while he would get a family that would pity him and just have him take one picture for them, but sometimes, if he is patient enough, he got a family that wanted five pictures or a large group who all wanted the same picture but on different cameras. Those were the days when he feasted on the McDonalds dollar menu and bought a new roll of duct tape or something else that he needed.

But most days Jack wouldn't get any "costumers", like today, for example. Today was a cold and windy early December. It had started to lightly rain around noon and had continued steadily since then. It was now evening and Jack hadn't made a single cent since he started at one. He had gone up to anyone who seemed touristy, but on account of how rainy and cold it was there weren't a lot of people around and those who were would tell him to shove it when he made his sales approach. Jack assumed that they didn't want to have to bother with him in the cold and wind and rain. Jack had given up around four and had been sitting on the sidewalk rapped up in a thin blanket he found, begging on for any spare change.

'\_I feel pathetic.'\_ Jack thought to himself, '\_well more pathetic then usual' "\_Spare change, please?" Jack asked a woman talking on her cell phone as she passed. She stopped and looked at him as she reached into her purse, still talking on her phone. She pulled out some change that she found at the bottom of her purse and put it in his plastic cup. Jack looked down at his earnings.

'\_Five quarters, two dimes, seven pennies, and a couple bobby pins.'\_ Jack thought with a dead panned look on his face, "Real generous of you lady!" Jack yelled to her. As she turned to look at him, quickening her pace, Jack yelled at her again.

"Yeah! I'll just get myself a nice pack of GUM! Keep hair outta my face while I chew it." Jack mumbled the last part to himself. He didn't care anymore what people thought of him, he really didn't. It didn't matter anyway; they just pass by him and barely give him a glance. Most think that Jack is some kid just wanting some money so that he can buy something that his parents won't buy for him. This is why Jack didn't straight up beg very often; people in times square like to take pictures in front of the big billboards of plays so they are mostly fine with stopping and having a kid come up and talk to them. But when you sit on the sidewalk up against a building, people who are on their way to somewhere else don't want to bother with you.

Jack kept begging though, wanting to make enough money for a hot chocolate at Starbucks. Man, he could go for one of those right now and maybe even a bagel. Jack's stomach growled and he was about to leave to try somewhere else when he saw a large man looking at him. He was very big and kind of intimidating. He had white hair and a bushy beard. Jack thought about leaving and avoiding this man but then he looked into his eyes. They were big and blue, but they were full of kindness. Kindness like Jack hadn't seen since his mother was with him. There was also excitement, but more hesitant and worried. Jack stood as the man came to him and held out his cup to the

man.

"Spare change?" Jack raised an eyebrow as he asked hesitantly.

"Ah!" The man said, "Of course." He had a thick accent, maybe Russian. He reached in his pocket and pulled out his wallet. He took out a dollar and placed it in Jack's hand, grasping it with both of his in a firm shake.

"Uh, thanks." Jack said, a little weirded out by the physical contact. He looked down at the money and saw that it was a twenty-dollar bill! Jack looked up at the Russian man, shocked at his generosity. "This is a twenty!" was all he could say.

"Boy your age should not be out in cold. Where are your parents?" The man asked with his thick accent.

Jack mentally sighed, '\_so he's one of those,' \_Jack thought. '\_A worried adult who wants to feel better about himself for helping the young kid out in the cold. Great.' \_Jack got one of those types every now and then. Sure they never gave him a fucking twenty before, that was new, but they always would ask him those stupid concerned questions like "Where are your parents?" or "Why are your clothes so dirty?" they never did anything though, only questions, never actions.

Jack would always give the same type of answer; "My family doesn't have much money so I go out every now and then to help." He told the man, hope that he sounded cheerful and like it was no big deal, like he was happy to do it. Usually people would say, "Well isn't that nice of you" or "don't work too hard". Not this man, he didn't seem to buy Jack's lie.

"I see," the man said solemnly. He looked Jack up and down, taking in his duct taped covered shoes, his ripped jeans, and his baggy blue hoodie. "Why don't I buy you something to eat and cup of hot chocolate? You can tell me more of this family, no?"

Jack wanted to take the man up for his offer, but he didn't know this man. For all he knew, this guy could be some pedophile and he was leading Jack to his white van where he would do unspeakable things to Jack. No, he wasn't going to fall for it.

"You think I'm stupid or something?" Jack said to the Russian with a glare, "Get away from me!"

"Jack, please-"

"How do you know my name?!" Jack asked frantically, cutting him off and back away, "What do you want?!"

"Just relax and I will explain-" The man tried again, a bit more urgently, but Jack cut him off again.

"No! STAY AWAY!" And with that Jack ran as fast as he could, away from that man. He looked over his shoulder to see if the man was following him. He just saw the man still standing there with his shoulders slumped. That didn't make Jack slow down though, he just kept running.

'\_Gotta make sure I lose him in case he is following me from a distance!\_' Jack thought to himself. '\_How does he know my name? HOW DOES HE KNOW MY NAME?! Has he been following me for a long time? I've sure never seen him before. Wouldn't I notice if a big, Santa Clause look alike in red was following me?\_'

Jack ran several blocks and was panting heavily before he stopped in front of an ally to catch his breath.

"I \*pant\* think \*pant\* I got rid of him." Jack wheezed out to himself as he doubled over and put his hands on his knees.

"Got rid of whom?" Jack heard a menacing voice from the ally say. Suddenly he was pulled into the darkness by his backpack and thrown to the ground! Jack gave a yelp and tried to get up but the foot on his chest pressed him down hard. Jack grabbed the foot and gave it a twist. The mugger, or so Jack assumed he was a mugger, cried out and jerked his foot back. Jack used this time to scramble up and run to the other end of the ally. But his attacker was quick to recover. He caught up to Jack and grabbed him roughly by the hair and tossed him into the building side. Jack's head hit the wall with a crack and he curled into a fetal position. He heard the man walk up to him and Jack looked up.

It wasn't the man Jack had expected it to be. Instead of the Russian who had known Jack's name, it was a man dressed all in black, and I mean everything. He had a long black coat, black dress shoes, a black shirt, and black slacks. Even his slicked back hair was black! The man's fingers nails were cracked and his skin was a sickly grey color. He had very thin, almost non-existent eyebrows and his eyes looked almost golden. He was very tall and thin but with the knife (black) in his hand, he looked very intimidating and dangerous.

Jack pushed himself up against the wall, wanting to sink into the shadows and away from this psycho.

"H-hey," Jack stuttered as the man slowly walked towards him and crouched down, "Just take my backpack and leave me alone." Jack took off his backpack and put it in front of the man. "Please, just let me go. I don't want any trou-"

"Shhhhâ€|" The man said stroked Jack's face with his knife. Jack shivered and tried to pull away from the sharp object that seemed to have shadows leek off of it and was \_way\_ to close for comfort.

"You see this," the man said, with a British accent, as he picked up the backpack, "Has nothing in it of interest to me." He then tossed it away showing Jack that this wasn't a mugging at all, as Jack originally thought. "You on the other hand," The man continued, "well, you have something in you that I am \_very \_interested in. Well two things that I am interested in. You see, I've been searching for years for someone who had a specialâ€|thing in them. There \_are\_ many, \_many \_people in the world with it, but it had to be a child, not an adult or a teenager, a young child. But no parent is just going to leave their child unattended, well none of the children I needed. I almost gave up on my search.

"Then I saw you, a starving little boy \_begging\_ for money and you had exactly what I needed inside of you too. It was almost to good to be true." The man then grabbed Jack's face with his boney hand, his

long nails digging into Jack's cheek, his knife held between his thin fingers. Jack tried to get out of his grip but the man grabbed his wrist and twisted it, subduing Jack in place. "I've been following you all week, \_Jack\_, making sure you were just right and then finding the right moment to grab you. When I saw you talking to that big oaf \_North\_, " the man said this with a snarl looking away. Jack tried to use this to his advantage. He brought his leg up to kick the man away but the man twisted Jack's wrist harder, causing Jack to cry out in pain. "Well," the man started talking again, looking back at Jack, "I knew that if he was here then it was about time that I picked you up." He then pouted, "and all this could've been avoided if you had just gone with North. Well it works out better for me anyway, so I thank you for that."

After he had finished with his villain monologue he pulled Jack to his feet by his hair and thrown to the ground in the center of the ally. He tried to get away but the man was quick and stomped on the back of Jack's leg, hard.

"AHHHHH!" Jack screamed in pain as he felt his leg break. He writhed onto his back in complete agony. Jack looked up at his tormentor as he climbed over him. Jack tried to fight and punch him but the man soon overtook him. He grabbed Jack's arms above his head with one hand and drew something out of his pocket with another. It was a dark stick, about ten inches long. The man pointed it at Jack and suddenly Jack's arms spread out to his sides but he could not move them at all!

'\_What the hell did he do to me?! \_How\_ the hell did he do it?!' \_But that wasn't the worst of his worries as the man started to cut open Jack's hoodie and t-shirt with the knife.

"HELP!" Jack screamed "HELP! HEL-" He was cut off when the man waved the stick again and Jack found he couldn't open his mouth!

'\_WHAT IS THIS?!' \_Jack tried to scream but his mouth would not budge. It was sealed.

"We don't want to be interrupted now do we?" The man was now sitting to Jack's right leaning over him. Jack tried to wiggle away but it was like he was stuck to the ground from the waist up. He tried to kick his legs at the man but he was on the side of his newly broken leg and Jack could barely reach him with the other. It was no use. There was nothing he could do.

"Let's get started shall we?" The man said with a grin, showing off his sharp, yellow teeth. He slowly lowered the knife onto Jack's bare stomach, the black blade cold against Jack's skin, "This will all be over soon, little Jackie. Relax."

'\_This can't be happening!\_' Jack thought '\_I still have to find Emma! I can't give up here! I have to fight! I have to get away!\_'

But there was nothing he could do when the cutting started. The knife dug into Jack's torso and started shredding his body. It sliced Jack up and down, left and right. It was excruciatingly painful. It wasn't just in one place where it hurt either. It was everywhere. Jack's whole body felt like it was being cut open, and Jack couldn't even scream. He could barely think straight and he was seeing black spots

in his vision. He was losing his strength fast but he knew that he couldn't fall asleep because he might never wake up.

'\_I can't die! N-not here!\_' \_Jack stared at his torturer and saw the gleeful look on his face. '\_Thisâ€|psycho is \_not\_â€|gonnaâ€|kill me!\_' \_Jack thoughts were getting slower and his leg started to stop kicking. '\_NO!\_' \_Jack thought strongly, forcing himself to stay awake\_, 'I will NOT die! Emma needs me!\_' \_

Suddenly Jack felt a pulse go through his body. It felt cold but warm and comforting at the same time. It overflowed his body and shot out, filling the dark ally with a bright blue light. Jack felt the man thrown off him and heard him land a few feet away with a grunt. For a while after the light had faded back into Jack there was just silence. Jack felt numb because of the light and his attacker was trying to get up off the ground after hitting his own head.

'\_Whatâ€|was thatâ€|? Didâ€|that happenâ€|'cause ofâ€|me?\_' \_It was becoming an effort to think now but Jack had to keep going. That light must've attracted \_someone's\_ attention! Jack couldn't die now that he was certain he was so close to rescue.

His heart sank, however, when he heard the sadistic man get up and started to slowly walk over to Jack.

"I don't know," He said with deep anger and malice in his voice, "what the \_hell\_ that was but I do know that I'm not going to stop with your organs." He was now almost over to Jack. "I think I'll go for your face now. Cut out an eye or maybe your tongue! Those are very useful ingredi-" He was cut off by a loud pop, like the sound of a bone breaking. The man looked up and cursed, he lowered himself into a defensive stance and raised that damned stick of his. Jack slowly turned his head to see what the man was looking at. It was very blurry and his vision had a bunch of black specks in it, so all Jack could make out was something big and red. Jack heard the big red blob shout something at Jack's tormentor and then there was a red flash of light.

'\_S'much red.'\_ Jack dreamily thought to himself still struggling to remain conscious. Jack heard footsteps running away behind him and then he saw the big red blob rush closer to him.

"Hey!" The blob said in a somewhat familiar voice but Jack could quite place it. "Jack you need to hang in a little longer, stay awake!" Jack felt his limbs release and his mouth become unstuck. But Jack had no strength left to do anything with his new freedom.

'\_But I wanna sleep. Why won't the red thingy let me sleep.'\_ \_Jack felt his eyes slipping closer and closer to being closed. He felt something hit him in his face and it jolted him awake slightly.

"I'm sorry," said the blob, really sounding apologetic, "But you need to be awake. This might hurt little bit."

Jack felt hands reach under his body and cried out when he felt sharp, stabbing pain go through his body.

Jack heard a voice but he couldn't make out any of it; everything sounded like he was under water and all the sound was above him. Jack

knew that he needed to focus and stay awake so he tried to focus on the pain and on the arms beneath him. He focused on the uncomfortable feeling of being pushed through a straw. He focused on the wind going through his hair and caressing his skin. But damn it was hard and he was slipping.

'\_Emma, I can't do it any more.'\_ Jack thought as he felt a tear go down his cheek\_. 'I'm so, so sorry. I never deserved to have you. I should've been a better brother.'\_

The last thing that Jack remembers before losing consciousness was the arms leaving him and the feeling of a bed underneath him. He saw bright white light and then darkness enveloped him.

~(TO BE CONTINUED)~

\*\*A/N HAAAAHA! I do not regret anything! So who was this evil man that did this to little Jackie? You guys should be mad at him and not me! I hope you liked the North and Jack interaction in this story!\*\*

\*\*Oh and for the guest that asked if I ship Tooth and North: I am more of a Tooth and Bunny shipper. I seriously love that ship! But if anyone wants to give me some ships that they like I'll see what I think and maybe even put them in the story! \*\*

\*\*Okay well I'll see you next week! Don't forget to review! \*\*

#### 4. Part One: Waking

~SOMETHING DIFFERENT~

Part One

\_chapter four\_

~(JACK)~

When Jack woke up it wasn't with a loud gasp and in his old home with his two parents and Emma realizing that all of it, his parents fighting, his moms death, being taken away from Emma, had been a terrible dream. No, that was not what happened, no matter how much he wished it. Jack woke up to his body aching, his chest tight, his head throbbing, and his throat very dry. His eyelids were heavy and he struggled to open them and when he did manage that he was met with blinding white light. He took several tries to get adjusted and when he did the sight he was met with was unlike any he had seen.

'\_Where am I?' \_Jack seemed to be in a hospital but it looked very old fashioned. There were hardly any equipment like heart monitors and the beds didn't have any fancy settings on them, they were just plain beds and there were about ten on each side of the room with patients in them resting. '\_Why am I in a hospital in the first place?' \_Jack tried to think back to the last thing he remembered but his head throbbed and made it very difficult to think.

'\_What happened? Why does everything hurt?' \_Jack thought putting a hand on his head.

Then he remembered the ally and the man inside who had attacked him. His breathing hitched and he sat straight up in an instant. This was a bad idea because as he did so white, hot pain came from his torso. Jack gave a pain filled yelp and placed his hands on his chest as though that would cease the pain. Jack winced as another jolt of pain came and he closed his eyes, trying to shut out the pain. But as soon as his vision went black all he could see was that mans face and his gruesome knife. Jack snapped his eyes open and gave a sound of distress. His breathing had picked up to almost hyperventilating and he searched frantically around the room for the exit.

He had the overwhelming urge to get out of this room and outside into the fresh air. Jack saw the door at the end of the aisle of hospital beds. He slowly and painfully made his way out of his bed. Of course as soon as Jack put weight on his feet his legs gave out from under him and he crumpled to the floor. Jack grasped the bed but didn't have the strength to pull himself up.

"Hey, kid," Jack heard the patient across from him say, "You alright?"

'\_That's a dumb question,' \_Jack thought bitterly '\_I'm in a hospital, you idiot. It's no wonder why you're here, I see.' \_Jack head was spinning and he felt cold sweat go down his face. He heard the man call for a nurse, or healer, and before Jack knew it he was back in his bed and being given something from a bottle.

"You need to relax, Jack." Said the nurse said to Jack in a soothing voice. "This will help relieve the pain and help you sleep."

'\_I don't want to sleep.' \_Jack thought to himself drearily '\_I just need someâ€¦freshâ€¦air.'\_ But whatever she just gave him was ridiculously strong and after a few small blinks of his eyes, Jack was asleep.

**\*\*XxX\*\***

When Jack woke up next he noticed that outside the windows it was dark out and inside there were, oddly enough, torches hanging on the wall omitting a warm glow.

'\_Well that does make adjusting to the light easier.'\_ Jack thought to himself groggily, still under the effects of the sleeping medicine. Jack looked around the room to see if there was a nurse who could get him some water. Jack felt like he hadn't had anything to drink in days, and for all he knew he could be right about that. But when he looked to his right he saw something that he hadn't expected at all.

A little girl with brown hair and a round face was sleeping in a chair with her head on his bed and holding his right hand. It was someone that Jack hadn't seen for a very long time.

"Emma?" Jack said in a hoarse voice, staring at his sister in shock.

'\_Please don't let this be a dream.' \_Jack thought, '\_I can't believe this!'

She was here! Next to Jack, holding his hand, blowing little exhales



of breath onto his arm and her head putting pressure on the mattress. She wasn't a dream! She was as real as the pain in his torso and the dryness of his throat. Jack tried to reach across his body with his free hand to stroke Emma's brown hair, but the pain was too hard to ignore, so he settled to just rub circles on her hand with his thumb.

'\_She's here,' \_Jack couldn't stop thinking it, '\_she's here.'\_

He stayed like that for a while, taking in his little sister's sleeping face. Her mouth slightly opened, the little freckles under her right eye, the tight grip on his hand like she would never let him go, everything. He could look at her long enough; she had gotten so big and was becoming so beautiful.

'\_I'm gonna have to chase the boys away from her pretty soon.'\_ Jack thought with a small smile.

After fifteen minutes of being conscious and feeling the happiest he's been in years, the quiet in the room was broken when a man's hushed voice spoke from Jack's left.

"I see that you've been reunited, dah?"

Jack turned to see who was there and saw, sitting back in a chair with his tattooed arms crossed in front of him, the Russian man who had talked to Jack that fateful day in New York. Jack stared at him quizzically and the man stared back at him with a mirthful look in his eyes.

"Are you stalking me?" Jack asked the man after a minute of silence.

The man gave a deep chuckle, making sure that it was low enough to not disturb the other patients in the room. "No, my boy," The man said, "I am not stalking you. Allow me to introduce myself, I am Nicholas St. North, but you can call me North."

"And you already know my name." Jack said to North with a slight coolness in his gravelly voice. "I'd like to know why you know my name and how Emma is here. Also," Jack paused and then sheepishly asked, "Could I have some water, please?"

North gave another small chuckle. "Of course Jack." He handed Jack a glass of water that was sitting on the side table. Jack took it gratefully and within five gulps, it was gone.

"Now," North said as he took the empty glass from Jack, "How I know your name is because of little Emma here. If you haven't noticed, I am an old man and I have had many experiences in my life. But my life has felt empty for a long time, I have never found a wife; therefore I have no children. I adopted Emma almost a year ago and I couldn't be happier."

Jack looked down at his sister wistfully. '\_She found a family. Does she even really need me anymore?\_'

"However," North drew Jack's attention to him again, "While Emma was grateful to be with me, she was very, how do you say, melancholy. She told me about the big brother that she had and missed very dearly. I

had asked her about him, you, and she told me everything that she remembered. She told me about how you were always there for her and took care of her no matter what." The way that Emma talked about him made Jack smile fondly. "I knew from hearing all these things that I wanted to meet you and to rejoin the two of you." Jack looked up taken aback.

"But why would you want to meet me?" Jack inquired, not knowing why anyone would want him. He was such a screw up and nothing ever went right when he was around.

"Why indeed!" North said with a laugh. "You must know that since meeting Emma and taken her home, I've seen her smile very few times. But when she talked about her big brother Jack, why I've never seen a bigger smile on any child! Not even on Christmas! Now, stop being so surprised and lets get back to story.

"I got in touch with social worker in charge of your files and asked to know where I could find you. But they said that you ran away and they had only been able to track you down to New York but other then that they knew nothing. This caused some distress for Emma but I told her that I would everything to find you. So, naturally, I came to New York and had a close friend of mine watch over Emma. I searched for you for 2 months, using old picture that Emma had of you. I talked to everyone who seemed to know anything. You are very hard person to track down, Jack."

"It's a gift." Jack said with a small shrug and a smirk, starting to feel a little comfortable around North.

"Indeed." North said, returning Jack's smirk with his own. "As I was saying, two months I had been searching for little boy in city that has millions of people. I was almost giving up and believe that I would never find you. But then while walking back to my hotel, I saw a child sitting outside in front of building, begging for money. I couldn't believe my eyes when I realized it was you! I must have checked the picture ten times to be sure!" Here he gave a loud laugh and it caused Jack to chuckle, liking the man more and more. "I went up to talk to you as you know, but I supposed that I was too excited and came across as a, uhâ€|stalker?" He asked Jack and raised a bushy white eyebrow.

"You came across as a creeper who wanted to kidnap me and chain me in your basement." Jack informed him bluntly.

North looked sheepishly at Jack and rubbed the back of his neck. "I apologize for that, and for this next part as it might make me sound like a 'creeper' again. When you ran off sort of followed you, but only to keep eye on you and make sure I didn't lose you. But of course I did and because of my foolish actions, you were attacked and I can't apologize enough." North tone grew heavy and Jack could see that this man was very tired, he possibly lost sleep worrying about if Jack was okay. Jack, although slightly distress from the remembrance of the incident, reassured North that it was Jack's fault to. "I found you and took you here to St. Mungos, we caused quite a scene in the entry room when I came in. The Healers were uncertain you would make the night, but you proved us all wrong. Once I made sure you would live I went back to my home in England to get Emma and we arrived earlier this afternoon. Emma hasn't left your side since; I had to convince the Healers to let us stay after visiting hours

because after Emma heard that you were awake just a few minutes before we got here, she was determined to not leave you alone."

Jack let everything sink in for a time, but mostly taking in the fact that Emma had been searching for Jack too.

'\_All this time I was worrying about finding you and I searched everywhere.' \_Jack thought as he gazed at his sister. '\_In the end, you found me.'\_

"How long was I out?" Jack asked absentmindedly. He wasn't even really that concerned, just curious.

"Three days." North informed him.

North and Jack sat in a comfortable silence after that, but Jack realized he had more to ask North.

"That man," Jack wasn't even really sure if his attacker could be even classified as human, \_he \_was more like a demon, "Who was he? Why did heâ€¦why did he do this to me?" Jack looked up at North, his heart felt like it was caught in his throat.

North gave a great sigh. "Jack, I will explain why you were attacked by that man, but first for you to understand that I must explain something else."

Jack silently wished that North would hurry up and just tell him, but he had a feeling that North did everything for a reason. So Jack patiently waited and listened to what North had to say.

"First off," North began, "What do you think about magic?"

Jack raised an eyebrow at North. '\_Is he serious? Magic?!' \_"Like the wand waving, abracadabra, hocus pocus, potion making, broom riding magic?" Jack asked skeptically.

"Yes," North affirmed Jack, completely dead serious, "What do you think of it?" He repeated, leaning forward in his chair.

"It doesn't exist." Jack said firmly.

"And why do you think that?"

"I don't think it, I know that it doesn't exist. Magic is just something that you tell little kids to make them feel better." Jack looked down at his lap, "I learned long ago that believing in fairy tales and \_magic\_ doesn't help you in the real world."

"Ah, but that is where you are wrong, my boy. Magic does in fact exist." North corrected him. Jack look at him disbelievingly.

"Prove it."

North smiled and brought out a smooth, thin stick and gave it a small wave. As soon as that happened snow and beautiful, twinkling lights fell from above Jack and circled around him. It was the most amazing things Jack has ever seen. He held up his hands and got the perfect snowflakes in his palm and felt an enjoyable chill. It was then that Jack realized what had just happened. Jack turned his head to North,

wide eyed and jaw hanging low.

"Okay." Jack said in a small, high pitched voice, "I believe you. Continue."

North smiled at Jack's astonished expression and slipped the stick, wand, into his pocket. "Now that you believe let me explain a little more. Yes, magic is real and I am a wizard and so are you."

Jack let that sink in. '\_I can't be a wizard! I'm not anything special. I've never even done magic before!' \_When Jack expressed his thoughts to North, North just gave a little smile.

"That is not truth, Jack. For you see you have used magic before." At Jack's confused expression North continued, "First let me explain something I couldn't earlier. When you ran off I did not follow you. When I first came across you I could sense strong magic in you. I knew that if you ran off I would have trouble finding you again so I placed a magical tracer on you. You see, when wizards are in trouble, the magic in our core will respond to the trouble. I invented this little trick to keep track of my comrades a while ago and to aid them. When you were attacked, your magic reacted and tried to protect you in a great burst of energy."

'\_So that's what the jolt was? My magic trying to protect me?' \_Jack thought.

"How come my magic never protected me before? Why did it choose only then to help me?" Jack felt abandoned for some reason and he was confused. This was all so much to take in. Especially after some sort of drug induced sleep.

North gave a gentle, knowing smile. "Magic is something very hard to control and to understand. It takes years of learning to even grasp basics." North explained vaguely. "However, one thing I am most certain about is that magic is something very special inside us all. It is our centers, if you want to think it that way. It is with us are whole lives and determines what and who we are! Even so, it takes the right time to appear before us. That night in the alley was the right time for your magic to appear. Understand?"

'\_Something special, huh?' \_Now that Jack thought about it, he did feel different somehow. He felt a small coldness in him, right in the center of his body, but it wasn't an uncomfortable cold. Jack felt it calming him, soothing all his worries. '\_I could get used to this feeling. Whether it took a long time to make it's presence or not, I'm glad that my magic saved me.' \_He sank farther back into his pillows feeling a little tired but wanting to keep going.

'\_This is a lot to take in for a guy who just came out of a drug induced sleep. Way to go Jackie boy.' \_He gave himself a mental pat on the back.

"Okay," Jack said to North, "Magic is real and we are both wizards and all that jazz, but what about \_him\_?" Jack's voice unconsciously filled with antipathy. "He said that I had 'something special' in me that he wanted and it sounded like he knew you. Do you know who he is?"

North's expression became weary almost instantly and ran a hand

through his hair. "I do know that man. He goes by a few names but his true name is Kozmotis Black."

Actually putting a name to that monster made him seem much worse. Jack's head throbbed and he put his hand to his head. \_'Well the name does fit.'\_ Jack thought, '\_Black?\_'

"He is a member of a group of dark wizards," North continued, "They are called Death Eaters."

"Wait? Dark wizards?" Jack asked slightly confused, "Death Eaters? Who came up with that name?" He said, trying to sound light-hearted but when he saw North's grim expression he decided to just let North explain.

"There are two sides to wizards, Light and Dark. Most wizards are on Light side, like myself. We try not to play gods and use magic for anything but good. But then there are those who relish in power and would do anything for it. About 15 years ago, a dark wizard gained power and followers and started a terrible war. He was very large threat and many wizards to this day fear the sound of his name. He was known as The Dark Lord Voldemort and he and his followers killed thousands before he was defeated. Kozmotis Black, or Pitch Black as many came to call him, was one of The Dark Lord's generals. He was one of the fiercest duelists and his skill in using the dark arts was second only to Voldemort. I was unfortunate enough to duel him on a few occasions and they had all been near death experiences. After Voldemort fell, he went into hiding and hadn't been heard of for nearly eight years."

"Until that night, three days ago." Jack said heavily.

"Yes," North agreed. "I contacted the wizard government about your attack and my sighting of Pitch and they are trying to find him. They even got the non-magical world looking for him under a story that they would understand. Jack," North leaned in, "If there is anything that you think that might be helpful, anything that he said, please tell me."

Jack would rather not think about that night at all anymore. He wanted to put it far away in the back of his mind or forget it completely. But he knew that would never happen. It would always be with him whether he wanted it to be or not.

"He said that I had something that he needed, something he had been looking for along time. He said that a lot of people had it in them but he needed a kid, like me. Someone who was all alone and had no family that would miss them" Jack said the last part softly to himself, but he knew from the large hand on his shoulder that North had heard him.

Jack tried to think of anything else but it was getting harder and his head was throbbing more and more. "Wait," He said remembering something, "He said that he needed two things in me. Do you know if that would help?" Jack looked at North.

"Hmm," North said as he combed a hand through his beard, "It is not much, but it gives me an idea of why he possibly did it." He huffed out a great sigh. "Jack, remember when I told you that Pitch was very skilled in Dark Arts?"

"Uh-huh." Jack said tiredly.

"Well that includes him being skilled in Dark rituals. He preformed a handful during the war and caused great panic, which only added the rituals. It was said that he used certain ingredients to make the rituals so potent. You see Jack, he used the organs and body parts of wizards and witches to fuel the intense magic of the rituals."

Jack let that sink in. "W-what are you trying to say? Do you think that he tried to t-take my organs for some sort of ritual?" Jack's eyes felt like they were going to pop out of his head and hit North in the face.

North regretfully nodded. "Jack, you are on pain reducing potions so you can not feel your body well, but you are in very bad shape."

"How bad?" Jack asked, not really wanting to know.

"When I found you," North started slowly, "You were lying in ally all covered in blood. You had so many cuts, deep and long. There were two in particular that stood out. One over your heart and the other is over your liver. The skin was pulled away and it was clear that he," North paused and took a deep breath and when Jack looked at him he saw the North look almost angry, "that he tried to take your organs."

"I took you here because with simple spell and few hours you would be good as new. But for some reason, no matter how hard Healers tried, your wounds would not close. It was discovered Pitch used dark artifact on you that was used often by him in the war. It was a dark dagger made out of black sand and when used it attacked like acid and ate away skin. Why Pitch uses this dagger was never discovered but it made him very feared and powerful. If it wasn't for his absolute loyalty to the Dark Lord, I do believe he would've tried to defeat Voldemort on his own."

"To get the black sand out of your system required very painful procedure and made it so they had to close wounds non-magical way. You will have scarring I am most sad to say."

Jack didn't know what to feel. He felt numb, but he could feel the wetness of tears going down his cheeks. His head throbbed and he could feel whatever they gave him for pain coming off and his body was slowly starting to ache. But he wanted to know more, so much more. He ignored everything his body was telling him and asked North more questions.

"B-but why couldn't he take someone else's organs?" Jack asked, looking down at his hands fretfully, "I mean, n-not like I want this to happen to anyone." He looked up at North, eyes shrink wrapped in tears, "But why did he specifically pick me? Did he know that I was a wizard?"

"I believe so, my boy." North said as his eyes softened, "A wizards body is all connected to magical center, so everything in us has magical properties. It has been said that before a wizard trains and hone skills, that is when wizard is has most raw power. I believe that Pitch wanted to take your organs specifically because you are

untrained wizard with raw power. You were homeless so he was able to get to you easier than if he went after child with mother always watching them."

Jack couldn't hold it together any longer. He let out a sob and draped an arm over his face.

'\_Why? WHY?!' \_Jack screamed in his head. \_'Why couldn't I have a normal life with Emma? Why couldn't my mom be alive and my dad still be a dad? How come I didn't get a childhood?\_ \_What did I do to disserve these things to happen to me? Is this really how life goes? Kids being attacked by psychos and not even get the assurance that it could've been anyone? That it was all just dumb luck and I was in the wrong place at the wrong time? No. Pitch had me picked out and it would've happened anyway. I was just lucky it was after I met North. Why is it always me? Why does God like to toy with my life?! Am I such a bad person that I need to be punished in this way?'

As Jack lay there in his hospital bed crying his eyes out and North sat next to him his chair trying to think of some way to help. Some way to distract Jack and to get him to stop crying, if only for a little while. North didn't want to wake up Emma and have her see her brother weak and crying. He didn't think that would be fair to Jack or to her.

'\_What to do, what to do?'\_ North thought to himself. \_'I need to find a way to cheer Jack up without saying something and making it worse. I need to find a way for him to laugh.'\_ North looked down at Jack, at the arm hiding most of his face in shame, at his bandaged forehead, and then at his hair. It was then that North remembered something else that had happened to him. '\_Ah-ha! This just maybe it!'\_ North quickly conjured a mirror and tried to grab Jack's attention.

"Jack," North placed a gentle hand on Jack's arm, "There is something you need to see. Something else that occurred because your magic protected you."

Jack was still very hysterical when he heard North say this. It took him a minute to calm down enough to ask "What?" in a small shaky voice.

"See for yourself." And with that North placed the mirror on Jack's lap. Jack looked down at it and then raised an eyebrow at North. "Go on." North encouraged.

'\_My face better not be deformed,'\_ Jack thought as he slowly raised the mirror. At first he only saw his red, puffy eyes and his bandaged forehead. Then he tilted the mirror up slightly and saw his hair. At least, he was pretty sure it was his hair.

His hair, which he was used to being brunet, was pure white. He then looked at his eyes closer and past the red puffiness he saw that instead of brown, they were a bright blue. Jack's jaw dropped and he stared at the new developments in his features. Jack slowly turned his head to North and North chuckled at his reaction.

"Let me explain." North said with a grin. "When your magic was released it put immense stress on your body. As a result, your body's way of handling it was to turn your hair white. If not for that, more

damage could have occurred to your body. As way to deal with the power spreading out of your system, your eyes absorbed a great amount of your magic and sent it circling through your body normally. If they had not done this you would have most likely lost all your magic."

Jack looked back at the mirror, astonished. He carefully slipped his right hand out of Emma's limp grip and pulled a lock of his white hair. Actually touching it and feeling it against his fingers made it much easier to believe. Without even meaning to, Jack let out a small laugh. It was then followed by another, and then another, and another. Pretty soon Jack was in a giggling fit and had to cover his mouth with his hand to stop from being too loud.

"I look so stupid!" Jack said between his laughter. North joined in with his own hushed laughter.

"What makes you say that?" North asked, cheerful that Jack was laughing.

"I look like hahaha an old man!"

"And what's wrong with that?" North asked incredulously, sitting up straight and crossing his arms. This only made Jack laugh even harder.

"I-I hahaha look, ow, I-like your son! Hahaha!" Jack was laughing so hard that new tears were coming to his eyes, but his stomach was starting to hurt so he tried to calm down a little.

North's eyes softened. "You could be. If you wanted to, of course."

Jack stopped laughing completely now but he still had a smile on his face. "What do you mean?" He asked.

"I could adopt you. Like I did Emma." North smiled at Jack expectantly.

Jack couldn't believe what he was hearing. \_'He wants to adopt me? He wants me to be his son? Why? Is it because he just wants Emma to be happy?\_' Then another part of his brain spoke up. \_'NO Jack you little dolt! Why would he sit here and watch you cry and try to comfort you unless he cared about you? He seems genuine, like you can actually trust him.'\_ But Jack still felt uneasy.

"How do I know you won't get tired of me and Emma one day?" Jack remembered the day when his father walked out of the door without even saying good-bye. Jack's last memory of him was his back; sometimes that was his only memory of him. "How do I know your not going to leave us?" Jack was scared of what North would say. He really did like North and he didn't want to think of the man like this but he couldn't help it.

"Jack Frost," North leaned closer to Jack, grabbed his hand, and looked him right in the eye, "I promise to never leave you like your father did. I promise to never separate you from Emma like child services did. I promise to never, \_never\_ hurt you like Pitch did. I swear to be the greatest father to you, if you would honor me with that privilege. Believe me when I say this Jack, I will never get



'tired' of you or Emma." He leaned back in his chair, "Is not possible. I care for you both too much!"

Jack couldn't breath. This man who really only met him an hour ago wanted to be his father. His \_father!\_ It filled Jack with such joy he almost jumped out of his bed to hug North. Almost. He settled for just a nod.

"Okay." He said, grinning the biggest grin he had ever done.

North laughed and clapped his hands. "Prekrasniy! Wonderful!" North stood and ruffled Jack's hair. "Now, you must sleep."

"But can't I wait for Emma to wake up?" Jack asked, "Please?"

"No." North said firmly, sounding exactly like a parent. "You can see her in the morning, you need your rest. You are still very injured. I can tell that the potions are wearing off so I will call Healer to give you more. I will be right back." North left Jack alone with the sleeping Emma and he started to stroke her hair.

'\_She's so beautiful. I can't believe we're together again. Please, if there is a God above, don't let this be a dream.'\_

When North came back a few minutes later, the nurse, or Healer as it seems that's the wizard term, came to Jack's side.

"Hi Jack, good to see you back with the living." She said teasingly with a British accent.

"Good to be back. Those other dead people weren't all that lively." Jack joked back. She giggled softly and helped him drink the liquid in the glass vial. Jack was already feeling the effects; becoming drowsier and his soreness was decreasing.

"Get some sleep Jack." North said as he ruffled Jack's newly white locks. "I will see you in morning." With that, North went over to pick up Emma.

"Wait." Jack said and North halted. "Can you wait till 'm sleepin' ta leave?" Jack knew that it wouldn't be long anyway until he was asleep and it wouldn't matter if North were there or not. But Jack felt the need to feel like someone was watching over him.

North smiled at him, "Of course, my boy. I will stay as long as you need me to."

Jack fell asleep soon after that. North felt it didn't matter any more if he took Emma back to their hotel. She was already asleep and if Jack did wake up again and found himself alone, well North couldn't do that. And after actually meeting Jack and talking to him, North couldn't bring himself to leave him.

'\_Such a small child.'\_ North thought. \_'Yet he is stronger the wild horses.'\_ North looked at Emma and Jack, both sound asleep. \_'My children. My little ones.'\_ North felt his heart fill with pride and swore to himself that they will never feel suffering like they have already lived ever again.

North settled into his chair, copied his adopted children and fell

asleep.

**\*\*XxX\*\***

Jack had been in the hospital for three weeks before he was released. When Jack had woken up from the night North explained everything to him, Emma was already up and had almost pounced on Jack when he awoke. But North warned her that she could hurt Jack so she made sure to give him a gentle hug, one that lasted for several minutes consisting of both of them crying and telling each other "I missed you so much" or "I'll never leave you again". When they parted, Emma laid next to him on his bed and they talked for hours about nothing in particular. They just relished being together.

But Jack's recovery was harder than he expected it to be. He first saw his wounds when getting his bandages changed and he reacted badly to it, very badly. Seeing the red, irritated gashes and stitches littering his body, he had a massive panic attack and it took both North and Emma half an hour to calm him down. He couldn't stand the sight of his wounds. Two jagged "Y" shaped cuts over his heart and to the right of his stomach were the worst ones. They were deep and the Healers said that they were taking longer to heal than they normally would, even with the help of various potions and creams. They suspected that these areas were effected longer by the black sand of that knife than the other slashes. What sickened Jack the most about his injuries was that even though Pitch only needed two organs, he still made numerous cuts all over Jack torso. It was as if Pitch just wanted Jack to be in pain, to suffer.

But having Emma and North beside him got him through all the rough parts. They stuck with him when he just needed someone to be there. They made him laugh if he got depressed and they took his mind off of things. North had gotten all the papers sorted out and had officially adopted Jack and they really did seem like father and son. Emma and Jack had easily slipped back into the role of siblings, almost like they were never separated. Jack constantly teased her and they would banter about the smallest things, North would just sit back and watch in amusement.

Since Jack still wasn't fit enough to travel by any magical transportation back to North's home in America, they had to travel the non-magical way, or the muggle way. Jack was still getting used to all the weird magical terms. When they were in the airport waiting for their flight, Jack felt very nervous. It felt like everyone was looking at him and the crowds were almost too much. It seemed that at any moment, Pitch would appear out of the crowd and take him away to finish the job. Jack held tightly onto Emma's hand as she walked to their gate and onto their plane. North got seats in First Class and Jack was sitting next to Emma, so Jack's nerves weren't that bad as they would be because there weren't that many people near them. But it wasn't until they were flying and Jack looked out the window that he felt at ease.

They were so high and the world was so far away. Jack couldn't believe that he was away from the messed up world below, if only for a little while. It was amazing and filled Jack with such joy and he pressed his face against the window to get a better look. North saw his delight and leaned over the aisle to talk to him.

"Jack." North said and Jack reluctantly turned his attention to North

and away from the amazing sight outside of the window. "In Wizarding World," North began, "we have many modes of transportation. One is magical flying broom sticks that you can ride."

Jacks eyes widened with amazement. "Really?" He asked excitedly.

"Yes!" North laughed. "I am actually maker of several types of brooms."

"Really?!" Jack asked, getting more and more excited. "Can you make me one?"

"Maybe one day. We even have a sport were they use brooms, called Quidditch."

They spent the rest of the flight with North telling Jack all about the Wizarding World. Emma had fallen asleep as she had heard all this before and Jack traded seats with her so that he could be closer the North. They had covered some of the basics when Jack was in the hospital, like the schooling, some basic laws, the money, but right now they were getting into the good stuff.

"Are dragons real?" Jack asked when they got onto the subject of magical creatures.

"Yes!" North informed him. "All sorts of dragons! There are many different breeds in world."

"What about werewolves?"

"They also exist."

"Cool." Was all Jack could say. In fact, every time North answered a question his response would be either be "cool" or "awesome". Jack couldn't think of any other way of saying it. Everything he was learning was just so cool and awesome!

Their plane landed around six in the evening and Jack was dead tired. He had been nervous about flying and seeing his new house so he barely got any sleep the night before. He had been planning on sleeping on the plane but then he started talking to North, and well you now the rest of the story.

He had been able to fall asleep as they took a taxi from the airport to North's house in upstate New York. It was a two hour drive and Jack did feel a little more rested when they stopped, but he knew he was gonna have to sleep as soon as he was settled.

When they got out of the taxi, Jack starred at the house in astonishment. Oh, and when I say house, I really mean giant mansion. Jack had never seen a bigger house. It had big steps leading up to an unnecessarily big door. The outside seemed to be made out of white marble and had several sections leading out and stood thee stories tall. Around the mansion were trees and pathways that lead to unknown places that Jack had the great urge to follow.

"Uh, North?" Jack asked.

"Yes, my boy?"

"How much money do you make from making brooms?"

"Well my brooms are best in world!" North said with a wave of his hand. "All professional Quidditch players use them and even Minister of Magic owns one of mine."

Jack didn't really know how to react to this information. \_'Best in the world, huh?' \_The ten year-old thought. \_'He better make me one.' \_

They all walked up the steps together and North opened the door to Jack's new home. The inside wasn't what Jack expected it to be like. He expected everything to white and all spread out, leaving a lot of empty space. What greeted him were warm colors like red and yellow. The floor plan of the house was close together but it didn't feel cramped. It felt warm and cozy. The entry room had a wide wooden door to the left and an open archway in front of them that seemed to lead into the living room. To the right was a large staircase that lead to the second floor and split into two hallways.

"Wow." Jack said and looked around him in amazement.

"Jack, Jack, Jack!" Emma said excitedly as she grasped his hand and jumped up and down, "Your going to love it here! There's so much to do! I can't wait to show you the back yard and the pond in the woods behind it! Dad never lets me go there alone but since you are here we can go together!"

"Yeah," Jack said with a tired chuckle, "sure."

"I have to show you my room! It's got a bunch of fairies painted on the walls that \_move!\_ And they sometimes talk to you!"

"That's really cool!" Jack said enthusiastically, remembering how much she liked fairies and the moving pictures that wizards have. \_'Two of her favorite things in one.' \_

"Not so fast, little one." North interjected. "Jack is tired and needs rest. You can show him your room tomorrow but right now let's take him to his room."

Emma looked down dejectedly for a second but then was soon smiling all over again. "\_Okay~!" \_She said and started to half skip half drag Jack up the stairs with North following behind them. The lead him up to the second level and down two hallways before they reached two doors. Jack could tell that the one on the right was Emma's room because of the sparkly sign on the door that said in choppy writing "Emma's Room".

"This is your room." North said as he opened the door on the left and lead gestured Jack to enter. Jack stepped in and looked around his bedroom, his first bedroom.

It was a fair size with bright blue walls and two windows in the wall across from the door and a window in the wall to the right of the door. It was pretty plainly decorated. It only had a bed, a dresser, a few shelves, and a desk in it. Jack went over to the bed and sat down on it.

"I know is not much," North started looked around the room and walked over to Jack, "But I did not want to fill room with things that I didn't know if you would like. We will go shopping and get things to hang on walls or books to put in shelves. We go tomorrow, today you rest." North patted Jack's shoulder. "Get some sleep, my boy." With that North took Emma out of the room and left Jack to sleep.

Jack looked around the room that was almost too large. \_'What am I even gonna put in this room? I've never had one so I guess I'll just have ta figure it out. North will probably help if I ask.'\_

Jack then took of his shoes and climbed under the sheets and drifted off into sleep.\_ 'Wow. This bed is almost too soft.'\_ Were his last thoughts before he went under.

**\*\*XxX\*\***

It was almost a year later that the man had visited. Jack and Emma were enjoying the last month of summer and were just coming in from swimming at the pond. They came in from the back yard using the kitchen door and sitting at the table was North, but he wasn't alone. Sitting with him was an old man with long, white hair and a long beard, longer than North's! He had blue eyes hidden under half-moon shaped glasses. His was wearing a robe that made Jack want to cringe, as it was brightly colored and covered in odd designs.

"Ah!" North said. "There you are, my little ones! Jack, go up stairs and change into dryer clothes and then come back down. My friend and I need to talk to you. Emma would you please just stay in your room for a little bit?"

Jack and Emma were confused but they did what North said. Jack quickly changed out of his swim trunks and shirt and pulled on khaki shorts and a hoodie and rushed back down stairs into the kitchen.

Jack sat down next to North at the table and across from the strange man.

"Jack, this is my good friend Albus Dumbledore."

"Hello Mr. Dumbledore." Jack said.

"Hello Jack." Dumbledore said. "How are you?"

"Um," Jack said uncertainly. "I'm okay, I guess."

"Jack." North said and Jack turned to look at him. "Albus is the Headmaster of Hogwarts and he came to personally tell you that you have been accepted."

Jack smiled at that and looked at the man across from him. "Really?" Dumbledore chuckled.

"Why of course. You have performed magic and Nicholas asked me if I would discuss with you about a certain matter."

"What do you mean?" Jack asked them, confused at the now solemn look on his adopted father's face.

"I explained to Albus," North started, "your situation and told him about \_that\_ incident."

Jacks face darkened and he looked down at his hand. "Oh." Was all he could say.

"Your father and I wanted to make sure that you were ready, Jack." Dumbledore said. "We wanted to know what you thought and then we will all decide from there. So, do you think you are ready? Really think, take your time Jack."

And Jack did. It had been about nine months since he had been attacked and he was doing fine. \_'No you aren't, Jack,' \_He said to himself \_'don't lie to yourself.'\_

Okay so he wasn't doing that well. Not that well at all, really. He had good days like today where everything was fine and he barely even thought about any of it. But there were a lot of days that he felt broken and woke up and he knew, he \_knew\_ that he would have an out of breath feeling all day. He couldn't stand looking at his body. The scars were sometimes too much for him and his panic attacks didn't seem to be getting better. He had terrible nightmares most nights. North had started making him a dreamless sleep potion, but it could only do so much. Then there were the crowds. Jack couldn't stop thinking that somewhere, hidden in the hordes of people, is Pitch waiting for him. He felt like a rope was being tied around his throat when he went in a crowd.

Jack looked at North and saw in his eyes that no matter what Jack chose, he would have his back no matter what.

"I'm not ready." Jack told Dumbledore.

Dumbledore nodded in understanding. "Then I have another question for you."

"O-Okay. Go ahead."

"Would you think you think you would be ready next year?" Dumbledore asked him and Jack looked at North. North smiled at him and placed a hand on his shoulder, telling him silently that he believed in Jack.

Jack smiled at the thought. \_'I have North and Emma. What can't I do with them helping me through?'\_

"Yeah." Jack told Dumbledore. "I believe I will be."

Dumbledore's eyes twinkled behind his glasses mischievously and Jack found himself coming to like this old man. "Then I have a suggestion. Why don't you come to Hogwarts next year? You would start your first year where most would their second year but I don't think that would be a problem. At Hogwarts you can make friendships and grow and learn. I believe that after the life that you have lead, you more than deserve to be at Hogwarts."

Jack looked at North to see what he thought and North gave him a nod and a firm squeeze on his shoulder. Jack felt confidence that he hasn't felt very often. He knew that he could do this. He believed in himself that he could overcome these demons and nightmares plaguing

him. He knew that North would be there for him when he needed him and would pick him up if he ever stumbled or fell.

"Yeah." Jack agreed. "I'll do it."

~(TO BE CONTINUED)~

\*\*A/N OH MY GOSH! This was the longest thing I have ever written! 8,123 words and 19 pages! Crap! Okay whoa man whoa. I'm sorry it took me forever to update but I really didn't want to split this chapter up at any point and I just wanted to get it done! And now it is and I have a feeling of accomplishment and you guys have a long chapter to read! Everyone is happy!\*\*

\*\*Okay so please tell how you liked it. I feel like I butchered Dumbledore at the end. What do you guys think? Also just putting it out there that I am now done with Jack's back-story. Who should I do next? Hiccup, Merida, or Rapunzel. I might do Merida next but I'm still no sure.\*\*

\*\*Please review and follow! Hopefully I can get a new chapter up in the next couple of weeks! Okay bye lovelies! I LOVE ALL OF YOU!\*\*

## 5. Part One: Fate

~SOMETHING DIFFERENT~

Part One

\_chapter five\_

~(MERIDA)~

Merida had always been told not to go into the forest at the edge of their property. Her parents would always scold her when she played too close to it.

"\_It isn't a place for wee lassies."\_ Her mother would say and would be followed by a warm "\_when you're older\_" from her father.

But now that Merida was 9 years old, she believed that it was about time that she was allowed to go in it for just a while. She would be super quick and just look around for a little bit. Her parents were so busy with her new baby brothers that they wouldn't even notice she was gone.

She snuck out after lunch when her parents were busy putting the boys to sleep for their nap. That always took a long time and Merida knew that she would have plenty of time to explore and then make it back inside.

It was a brisk October with the wind blowing lightly, chilling the bone. But Merida didn't mind. She loved living in Scotland where the wind was always there to keep her company and play with her wild red hair. She pulled her coat closer around her and jumped into a newly formed puddle from the rain that came last night. Her red rain boots collided with the water and mud and Merida gave a delightful giggle before running toward the forest.

As Merida reached the edge of the property she slowed to a stop. She looked back at her large house and then back into the dim forest. She started to think that maybe this isn't such a good idea and that she should go back. But she didn't want anyone to think that she wasn't brave so she steeled her nerves.

"Ye can do this Merida," she told herself, "Mum and Dad won' notice a thin'. This is yer firs' adventure an' ye ain' backin' out now."

Merida took a deep breath and travelled into the forest.

She expected that the forest would be dark and scary and full of creatures that she would have to run from. But as she took her first steps in and looked around she found that it wasn't scary at all. In fact, it was really, \_ really\_ pretty in the woods.

The sunlight was streaming through the leaves and casting exciting shadows on the ground and beams of light would shine down on pathways farther into the wood, begging for her to chase them. She saw a trickling brook farther away to her right and she heard the water rushing through it and over rocks. The colors of fall overtook her vision as she looked up and she saw birds flying around the treetops.

"Why would mum and dad no' wan' me ta go in here?" Merida said to herself. "It's so pretty in here!"

Merida ran around the forest for almost an hour, always making sure she could see the path if she wanted to get off of it so that she wouldn't get lost. She explored every nook and cranny that she could. When she thought she was out here for too long she reluctantly but hurriedly made her way back to the house, thinking that for sure her parents noticed that she was missing.

She walked in the kitchen door slowly, thinking that her father would be there to scold her. But as she looked around she noticed that nobody was there. She took off her muddy rain boots and coat and made sure there weren't any leaves in her wild hair. She looked around the bottom floor of her large house. When she still hadn't found either of her parents she went up stairs to look.

She checked the boys' nursery first and lo and behold she found her parents, still busy with her brothers. Well at least, her mother was busy with one of the boys, Hamish, and her father was asleep with the other two in the rocking chair.

Her mother, Elinor, was bouncing Hamish in her arms and he was giving little giggles. Merida loved her new brothers. Since they had come into her life 2 months ago they have been such joys. Her parents had trouble every now and then in trying to figure out which was which, but Merida always could tell the boys apart. To her it was obvious. Sure they were only a few months old, but they all already had distinct personalities. Harris was the oldest and very laid back and easy to get to fall asleep. Hubert was very fussy but incredibly sweet and he loved Merida very much. Hamish was the youngest and he was always happy and energetic. He was the hardest to put to sleep but he hardly ever cried and that made him the easiest to care for.



Merida came into the room and her mother turned to look at her.

"Oh, Merida!" Her mother said. "Would you be a dear an' hand me Huber's bottle?" She said it like she didn't even notice that Merida had been gone. She probably hadn't, Merida realized and she felt a little sad at that.

"You mean Hamish's?" Merida corrected as she reached for the correct bottle.

Her mother looked down at the baby sitting on her left hip and ran a hand through her messy hair.

"Oh yes." She then gave a little laugh. "I feel so silly, mistaking me own babe. Thank you dear." She took the bottle and started to feed Hamish and sat down in the other rocking chair.

Merida stared at her mother as she fed the baby. \_'She didn't even know I was gone.'\_ Merida thought bitterly. \_'Am I being forgotten by me own parents?\_'

Merida's mother looked up at her. "Do you need anything dear? Are you hungry?"

Merida cast those dark thoughts away and gave a little smile. "Yeah, a bit. But I can make meself somethin'. You take care of Hamish."

"Are you sure?" Her mother asked.

"Yeah, I'm sure." Merida answered as she walked out of the room and into the kitchen.

That night, as she laid in her bed trying to fall asleep, Merida realized that her parents were so busy that they wouldn't notice if she went into the woods during her afternoons. Both of her parents had a month left of leave from their jobs at the Ministry and Merida figured she could have adventures in the woods until then and they got a nursemaid.

That is what she did. For the next few weeks, Merida would go into the exciting woods for hours and explored everything she could. She went very deep into the woods and saw many different animals. She saw deer, a few bears, squirrels, and so many different birds. And on the days were she went a little off the path she even saw some magical creatures. She saw two Unicorns, a pack of Centaurs running in the distance, and even a few pixies. She made sure to stay far away from them because she knew that all magical creatures could be dangerous, even the little pixies could fly her away.

Merida loved the forest more than anything she had. When she was out there she could be free and be who ever she wanted to be and do what ever she wanted to do. No one told her it was too dangerous or that she was too young or small to do anything. Merida could climb to the top of almost any tree and swim in any pond, river, or stream she could find. She never wanted to leave the forest at the end of the day but she knew that if her parents found out about her adventures in the forest they would forbid her to ever go in again. Going behind someone's back when they don't know you're doing something they don't

want you to and going behind someone's back when they told you not to do it ever again are two completely different things.

Today, however, would be the last day she would be able to go into the forest. Her parents were going back to work soon and they wanted to go on holiday for two days with Merida and the boys before they went back. Once her parents went back to work she would have to help the new house keeper/nursemaid, Maudie, with the boys and she wouldn't have much free time or privacy. Maudie would make sure to keep an eye on Merida as well as the boys.

Merida made sure that her parents were busy, as she always does, and made her way outside. Merida planned to go deeper in the forest than she has yet, she even packed herself a little lunch for when she got peckish.

As Merida went past all of the familiar places she started to move off the path more and more and eventually she was off of it for longer than she had ever been before. The trees were taller and there were more animals and magical creatures deeper into the woods. She ran around in the newer area longer than she usually did, always making sure that she could see the path or find her way back. She found a river with a big fallen tree going across it like a bridge and she decided to eat her lunch on it.

'\_I'm so far away from my house.'\_ Merida thought to herself as she took a bite of her sandwich and swung her legs on the fallen tree. \_'And it's getting pretty late. I've must have been out here for almost 4 hours, longer than I usually do.'\_

Merida figured that she could eat her sandwich before she should head back. The walk back was always faster than the walk up. The walk into the forest she was busy exploring and the walk back she just went straight home. But as she was taking the last few bites of her sandwich she heard a soft sound behind her. Merida turned around, but nothing was there. Merida stood up and looked around.

"What was tha'?" she said to herself. "Sounded like a laughing babe."

She then heard it again and she took off through the trees in the sounds direction, leaving her bag behind with the rest of her lunch.

She jogged through this new section of woods, slightly more overgrown than other parts, and peeked around several trees, trying to find the sounds source. She was about to give up, but then she heard it directly behind her. The soft, ringing laughter, Merida had the feeling that if she moved to fast she would startle it, but she couldn't help herself. She quickly spun around and let out a soft gasp. Floating in front of her was a creature that were only stuff of legend, creatures so rare, even wizards didn't believe they existed.

"A will o' the wisp!" Merida said quietly but excitedly. The wisp was blue, had a wispy flame like body, and floating as if it was treading water. It whispered sweetly to her, beckoning her closer and closer. Merida timidly reached her hand forward to touch it. But before she could, it disappeared in a puff. Merida was about to let out a noise of displeasure only to stop herself when she saw a new wisp appear

just ten feet ahead of her, and behind that one was another and another and another.

"What do yea wan'?" Merida asked the trail of wisps that disappeared ahead of her.

It was then that she remembered something that her mum had told her when she was small.

"\_The wisps lead yea to yer fate. If you ever come across them, follow them and you will be changed forever." \_Merida's mother would tell her about old princes and princesses who saved their kingdoms, found love, or went on fantastic adventures because they followed the wisps.

"Do you wan' me ta follow yea?" Merida asked the wisp, she was answered with more soft chimes and whispers.

Merida was afraid to take her eyes off the wisps, afraid they would disappear, but she did anyway. She looked behind her and through the trees far in the distance she could catch a glimpse of one of her house's chimneys. \_'It's getting late,'\_ she thought to herself, \_'mum and dad will realize I'm gone soon.'\_ But even so, Merida turned her gaze back to the wisps, still dancing and tempting her forward, deeper into the forest. Merida knew that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity and that the wisps would never appear to her again and she will regret it for all her life if she doesn't go with the wisps. Merida made her choice, she started to walk toward the magical creatures, deeper and deeper and deeper and \_deeper\_ into the forest until she was in the middle of a clearing with a single wisp in front of her.

This wisp was at the center of a circle of large rocks, all pointed at the sky and they looked very menacing. It had gotten much, much darker and Merida knew that by now her parents and servants were looking for her. But Merida couldn't have just let the wisps get away from her; she \_had\_ to see where they would take her. However, now that she was here, in this odd circle of stones, Merida felt cheated.

"Well," She said with a huff, "There ain't anythin' special about this place! Where's me fate?" She asked the wisp who was still there. Merida walked towards the creature. "I'm tired, hungry, I've been walkin' for hours, the sun is set and the big ol' moon be the only thing lighting the night, and I've probably scared my parents to death! Where is me fate?!" She was now right up next to the wisp and now that she could see it better it kind of looked a little sad, like it was sorry. Merida wondered why that was, but the wisp disappeared and, behind where the wisp used to be, she saw a man step out from the trees beyond the stone circle.

Merida and the man starred at each other for a brief moment until the man spoke up.

"Why 'ello thar little lassie!" the man said with a friendly smile, an accent as thick as her father's, and a wave of his hand. "What migh' yea be doin' out 'ere so late a' nigh'?" He started to walk towards her.

"I-I was, uh, following will o' the wisps." Merida answered

nervously.

"Wisps, eh?" The man asked now inside the circle and half way to Merida. "Yea mean the creatures that lead ya to yea fate? Yea followed some? And they led you 'ere to the circle?"

\_Run,\_ an instinct inside of Merida told her,\_ don't let him get any closer and just run.\_ But she ignored it, "Yes," Merida told the man, "the last one just disappeared righ' before yea entered the clearing."

The man let out a sound of exaggerated disappointment, "So I missed me own chance to find me fate?" He was now right in front of Merida and towering above her until he kneeled. "Oh well, why don't we try to figure out what yea are 'ere? Why yea were lead to this place on this nigh'?" Now that man was right in front of her, Merida had a good look of his face. He had a scar going over his left eye and black, shaggy hair that just went past his shoulders and half of it was held up in a ponytail. His nose looked like it had been broken a lot and he was tall, very tall, even when crouching, and \_very\_ muscular. When he smiled his teeth were crocked and sharper than most teeth that Merida has seen.

\_Run,\_ said her instincts again, get\_ away from him. Don't trust him.\_ But Merida was tired, scared, and lost. Here was an adult who was offering her his help and she just wanted to get home.

"Can you just help me find my home?" Merida asked him

\_Don't.\_

"Sure thing lassie, what's yea name?"

\_Go!\_

"I'm Merida Dunbroch."

\_Don't trust him.\_

"A Dunbroch, eh?" Something sparked in his eye. "Well this just makes thing even more fun. Being in the presence of someone so noble."

\_Get away\_

"What's yer name?" Merida asked the man who was now grinning.

\_Run, run, run!\_ '\_Shut up!\_' Merida told her instincts.

"Oh, you know me. Well, at least know \_of\_ me, that is if dear ol' daddy tol' you of me." He looked up at the sky then, with the clouds starting to move away from the full moon, and then looked back down at her and smiled even more, and Merida could swore he looked like a beast.

\_Too late\_

"Me name's Dougal, Dougal Mor'du."

Merida's stomach dropped and her heart started to pound so hard she could hear it. Yes, her father had told her about Dougal Mor'du, it was hard to get him to shut up about him sometimes. Dougal Mor'du the Dark Wizard. Dougal Mor'du, the man who took off her father's leg in the Wizarding War. Dougal Mor'du the fugitive. Dougal Mor'du the murderer.

Dougal Mor'du the Werewolf.

Merida turned to run away but Mor'du grabbed wrist and pulled her tightly to his body. Merida screamed and kicked but it did no good; he was three times stronger than her.

"Let me go!" Merida cried, trying to lift herself up and out of his tight grip.

"Not a chance, little lassie." Mor'du laughed. "Why, you're going to be helping me with something' after all."

"What?" Merida stopped struggling and looked at him confused.

"It be true, little lassie." Mor'du said as he shifted in a more comfortable sitting position, still keeping her in an iron grip. "Yea see, yer Auror daddy and his little Auror pals have been bothering me fer some time now. I can never seem to shake them, especially yer daddy. I suppos' he still holds a grudge fer me taking off 'is leg. Anyway, yer daddy took someone special away from me during the war. He took me mate, me lovely Blair." For a second, Merida felt a little sorry for this man who had lost the woman he loved. That was until he grabbed her face and sneered, "For tha' 'e mus' pay. I figured that since he took someone away from me that \_I\_ loved, I should take someone that \_he\_ loves away from him.

"I was originally goin' to kill his wife, yer mummy. I planed to sneak into their bed room tonight, kill 'er, and then leave 'im to find 'er in the morn'. Bu' then, I met you, 'is wee girl! An' I got an even better idea. What if instead of killing ol' Fergus's wife, I kill 'is wee girl?" Mor'du gave a deep chortle and Merida struggled to get out of his grip even harder.

"NO!" Merida screamed. "Let me go!" she then elbowed Mor'du in the face causing the madman to loosen his grip, but unfortunately not enough for her to get away.

"Stop struggling," Mor'du growled, "yea're only making it harder on yeself." He said softly as he wiped away her flowing tears. "And 'sides, the moon will be out in three," He slowly turned his head to the sky as he counted, watching the last cloud disappear from in front of the moon, "two." \_'I should never have goon into this forest.'\_ Merida thought to herself, looking it the werewolf's face, already starting to shift and change. \_'I should've just listened to mum and dad.'\_

"One." And sure enough, a bright beam of moonlight quickly crept its way through the ruin meadow and soon washed over Merida and Mor'du. As soon as the moonlight hit him, Mor'du started to change. His body jerked forward over himself and his face stretched and morphed into great wolf like features. His teeth sharpened and grew. His hand loosened around Merida's arm and she managed to slip out. She lost her balance and fell to the ground, but she got of the ground and ran

as fast as she could as far away from Mor'du.

She didn't get far though, she barely got out of the stone circle before she felt something latch onto her right arm and throw her back into the circle. Merida cried in pain as she was flung and landed on the hard ground. She looked down at her arm and gasped in horror. She had a large, bleeding bite on her small forearm. A werewolf had bitten her, and she had heard enough stories from her father about them that it was the worst thing that could've happened to her.

There was no way out of a werewolf bite. If you were bitten you would become a werewolf.

"NO!" Merida screamed. She looked up and saw the werewolf running towards her. She tried to get up but she couldn't; her legs felt like jelly and her right arm hurt too much to push up the ground. She screamed louder as Mor'du came upon her. He pinned her to the ground and she tried to wiggle out but nothing worked.

"\_\*\*Stop struggling little lassie.\*\*\_" Mor'du growled in a terrifying voice that sounded like a wolf's howl and rocks being scraped together. "\_\*\*You're going to die! There is nothing you can do to stop it. So just stop screaming.\*\*\_" With that Mor'du smiled at her, with wolf-like face and sharp teeth, and he attacked.

'\_Is this my fate?\_' Merida thought as her left shoulder burst into pain and screaming as hard and as loud as she could. '\_To die at the hands of a werewolf, seeking revenge against daddy? I don't want to die like this. I don't want to leave.'\_ Merida turned her head to the right and saw a wisp floating at the edge of the meadow. '\_The wisps led me here to die? That's it? That's my fate? Please wisp.'\_ Merida thought out to it, tears blurring her vision. '\_Please. Help me.'\_

Just then, two grey hounds ran out of the woods and into the clearing, barking madly at the werewolf. Mor'du stopped mauling Merida and peered at the dogs running towards him and howled angrily at them, ready to attack. But before he could pounce, four wizards ran out of the woods and started firing spells at him. Mor'du growled and started to back away. He was about to sprint off but he first looked down at Merida, sprawled in the dirt and grass.

"\_\*\*We aren't finished here\*\*\_" He sneered. "\_\*\*Just you wait, little lassie.\*\*\_" Mor'du then ran off into the woods with the dogs chasing after him. As the werewolf disappeared into the trees, a familiar voice halted the dogs. Someone was next to Merida, talking to her. But she could see who it was, she could hear who it was.

All she could see was the bright full moon above her and the only sound she could hear was a soft laughter.

The sound of a wisp.

~(TO BE CONTINUED)~

\*\*A/N Hello my lovelies! Merry Christmas! Sorry it has been so very long since I have updated but life kind of got in the way. And also I got into Game of Thrones and that can kind of cause someone to lose focus on a lot of things. But I finally finished this chapter! I

don't know when the next one will be out but do not worry. It will be done! I love you guys soooooooooo much!\*\*

\*\*Btw! Have you guys seen the new HtTYD2 Trailer?! OMG so good! I am so excited for June to come and see it! \*\*

\*\*Anyways! I hoped you all had a very Merry Christmas filled with happiness and laughter and love. And if any of you got judged by your family here is internet huge of love and happiness from me to you (")(") p.s. this is for anyone who needs a hug\*\*

\*\*Leave a review and tell me what you thought of the chapter, what you want to see in the future, or even a hello. Thanks for reading!\*\*

## 6. Part One: Choosing

\*\*A/N OMG! Hello all of my readers! I am so sorry that I have not updated in almost a year. I went through a block during the summer and then just got too busy with the start of my senior year. But since the first semester is almost over, \*\*\_\*\*hopefully\*\*\_\*\* I will be able to update more. I'm like seriously upset that I didn't write more this summer :P\*\*

\*\*ANYWAY! Here you go after your long long long LONG wait.\*\*

~SOMETHING DIFFERENT~

Part One

\_chapter six\_

~(MERIDA)~

\_Thunk\_

The arrow hit the tree to the right of the target.

\_Thunk\_

This next arrow hit the ground in front of the target.

\_Swoosh\_

This one just flew over the target and into the woods.

"ARGH!" Merida cried. In her anger she loosed another arrow and quickly shot it at the target. This one made it dead center.

"Finally!" Merida said in exasperation, dropping her arms to her side. She had been trying to get that for an hour, hers arms were sore and the grounds were littered with arrows. The grouchy ten year-old let her bow drop out of her grasp. She sat down with a huff of disappointment and shrugged off her quiver.

Although the weather was near perfect, it did nothing to quench

Merida's frustration. In fact, it only made her cynical and angry.

'\_Oh look at those bloody birds flying around.'\_ Merida thought with resentment. '\_And that fluffy cloud up there in the sky. So pretty and perfect and normal; all free to do what they want and drift wherever the wind takes them. Not stuck here in this house like \_me\_, locked away from the world! Nope, whatever they want to do they can do. I, on the other hand, can barely go out side to practice me archery. Which, by the way, is supposed to help me!'\_

It was true; ever since she had been bitten Merida could barely go ten feet from her house. Her mother used to be protective about Merida, but now she was obsessed with keeping her in line and out of trouble. It has been \_months\_, almost a year, since that despicable man bit Merida, months since she became like \_him.\_

A werewolf.

It was awful. Merida had always been told that being a werewolf was one of the worst things that could happen to you and she had always figured that that change every month was painful, \_very\_ painful, but nothing had prepared her for what it was really like.

Most days, herâ€|condition wasn't much of a problem. She could pretend that she had never been attacked and that she wouldn't turn into a beast once a month or that the world wouldn't shun her if they knew her secret. But in the past months Merida felt more rejection than she could ever even begin to understand. Her parents fired so many of their servants and friendships have been completely severed all because of Merida. Everything was her fault.

Merida now knew why her parents never let her into the forest. Why her brothers will \_never\_ go into the forest. Why no one goes into the forest. It isn't meant for people. It is meant for creatures and beasts, not for wee lasses and lads. Merida can now see that the beauty that she saw was only a cover for the real, true face of the forest. One of anger and terror, that will pull you in and seduce you into never leaving it and if you try, it will leave you a fate worse than death.

Merida looked at her raw fingers and sighed. The healers said that the bite on her arm would heal but she would have to take up an activity to strengthen the muscles again. Merida had chosen archery because her father is an archer and she always thought that it looked so powerful and fun, and he had always said that archery takes great control. Lord knows that she needs a little control in her life. But her mother hardly lets her out to practice and she could hardly see any improvement because of that.

Merida stood and started to collect the arrows around her.

'\_If only mum didn't coddle me so much these days.'\_ Merida thought bitterly. '\_I understand that she is worried about me but there has to be a limit. The boys need attention just as much as I, more so than I! Can't I be left in peace and be treated normally like I used to. Mum makes a bigger deal out of my condition than I do and \_I'm\_ the \_bloody\_ \_werewolf\_ for crying out loud!'\_

Merida groaned in frustration as she aggressively threw her arrows



into her quiver. \_'Turning into a wolf isn't even the worst part of all this, really. That is at least for only for a few hours, and I have the wolf's bane potion to help get through it. The worst of being a werewolf is when I'm not a wolf. Everyone is either tentative around me or think I'm fragile or they're scared that I'll go after them or something if they are rude to me. My family being wealthy and powerful doesn't help much either. They have a public face and have to keep the fact that their daughter is a werewolf a secret or the press will go mad with the story. If that ever happens, I'll never be able to hide it when I'm older and have a normal life.'\_

Also her parents will be shamed at their jobs. Merida knows that the fact that she is a werewolf doesn't stop them from loving her but she finds it hard to believe that they aren't embarrassed by her or frightened about what other people will think of the family. Her father is a famous werewolf hunter for goodness sakes! During the last war he put a stop to many powerful werewolf packs working for the Dark Lord. He was now the head of the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures at the Ministry of Magic. His job was to control creatures like her and not let incidents like this happen, whether it was an accident or not. And her mother, her mother was on the Wizengamot and had a huge public face. If word got out that her daughter was a werewolf she would certainly face spite from her co-workers and definitely from the Daily Prophet. Merida wouldn't be able to live with herself if that happened to either of her parents. They may say that it doesn't matter and they don't care about their image, but Merida can't risk it.

So she stays hidden at home even though she hates it and her parents are doing everything they can to minimize the amount she can leave the property. Her family usually visits her grandparents during Christmas but this year they stayed home. Merida's parents said it was so that they can celebrate the boy's first Christmas as a family at home. But Merida knows that it was to keep her hidden.

'\_I should be a were\_MOLE\_ instead of a werewolf. That way I could just hide under ground and make it easier for everyone.'\_

Merida's stomach growled and she figured that she should go inside and eat lunch. Merida wanted to stay outside but knew her mother would freak if she stayed out any longer. Merida shouldered her quiver, grabbed her bow, and stood up. When she made it to her back door she gave one more look at her back yard. Her gaze lingered at the dark trees bordering her property. Merida sighed and entered the house.

Merida immediately ran into her mother.

"Oh!" her mother exclaimed as they collided. "Merida! I was just about to come and get you." She smiled and Merida felt guilty. Even though she was frustrating, her mother just wanted to protect her because she loved Merida. And Merida loved her.

"Yeah." Merida gave a small smile, suddenly feeling tired. "I'm gonna go wash up." Merida hung up her archery gear on its rack next to the coat hangers by the door. Merida always found it funny that her father and she would hang their weapons where the rest of the household hung their coats.

"Oh, actually," Merida's mother stopped her "there are some people

here to see you."

Merida shrugged off her jacket and looked at her mother. Her mother seemed a little apprehensive that there were people here to see her daughter, but also hopeful and excited. Like this was a very good thing that people were here to speak with Merida.

"What about?" Merida never got anyone to see her so this was a very curious thing indeed.

"Well come on and ask them ye self." Her mother said and led her into the sitting room.

In the room were two people, a man and woman. Merida was almost shocked by how different they were.

The woman had a very stern and regal look. She had salt and pepper hair pulled into a tight bun and glasses perched at the edge of her nose. Her dress was old fashioned and had a high collar. The woman was old but not decrepit, She stood very straight and proper, like the way mother is always trying to get Merida to. Merida got the feeling that this was a woman that the last thing you would want to do was cross her. Merida was instantly reminded of her mother and how she can look like a queen whenever she wanted to. This woman was a queen in her own way.

The man, however, was raggedy and look very tired. His light brown hair was messy and it looked like the man tried to make it look nice but failed. He was dressed in a sweater and a brown, tattered blazer with brown, patchy trousers. He was sitting on the couch with his arms resting on his knees and looking at Merida as she walked into the room. He was younger than the woman. He was maybe thirty or thirty-five, Merida was unsure. His face was still young but his eyes were what threw Merida off. They were so old and had such depth that Merida felt she would sink into them. They were so familiar, Merida realized with a start. Like looking into a mirror.

Before she could think more about the man's familiarity her mother placed a hand on her shoulder and jolted her out of her thoughts.

"Merida," She said, "these are some old friends of mine. This is Minerva McGonagall," She gestured towards the woman, "and Remus Lupin." The man stood as he was introduced. He was rather tall, Merida noticed, but in a lanky kind of way.

Merida realized that she was staring. "Hi." She said as she blushed and ducked her head. Why was she suddenly so shy? Was it because she hasn't been around strangers for so long? She looked up at the woman. "What did you want to talk to me about?" She never got anyone ask to see her so this was kind of a big deal for her.

"Come and sit, child." The woman said gesturing to the couch like this was her office or something. When Merida had seated herself the woman continued speaking.

"As your mother has informed you, my name is Minerva McGonagall but you may call me Professor McGonagall. I am the Deputy Headmistress at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry."

'\_Oh, that's what this is about?\_' Merida thought bitterly and then looked at her mother to glare at her.

"Merida," her mother came next to the professor, exasperated, "would you just listen to what they have to say! You might reconsider."

Merida huffed, "I doubt that." She mumbled but knew that they could hear her. Her mother gave McGonagall a look that practically said, "see what I got to deal with."

Merida was so not pleased. She had received her Hogwarts letter a month ago but she declined immediately, which confused her parents immensely. "\_I thought you wanted to go to Hogwarts!"\_ Her mother said. "\_Isn't this what you want. Don't you hate being cooped up?"\_ Her father had asked. Merida didn't give them the answers they wanted, they wouldn't understand. It wasn't that Merida didn't want to go to Hogwarts or that she didn't want to get out of the house, she wanted that more than anything. But she was scared; in fact, she's been scared since that night. She tried not to show it but she always felt this horrible terror right beneath her skin. She felt it all the time and nothing could distract her from it. She can forget what she is for a time but even denial cannot hide the beast that lives inside of her.

Because of this, Merida cannot bring herself to go to this school. She does not trust herself to be able to control herself being around so many people, so many kids. Since being bitten, she can feel the beast beneath her skin trying to claw its way out. No one could be safe from a monster like her. Merida wasn't even confident to be around her parents and she barely lets herself near her baby brothers. She feels so guilty and ashamed all the time and no one could understand that.

Despite these thoughts, Merida gave in. "Fine!" She slumped back and crossed her arms. "I'll listen to what ye have to say. But I can't promise I'll want to go to your school afterwards."

Her mother sighed and Professor McGonagall gave a little smile. Merida turned her attention to the man, Remus Lupin, who has been silent this whole time. Merida was starting to think that he had no use other than to just stand there.

'\_What is with him? Is he even a professor? Sure doesn't look like one.'\_

"Merida." McGonagall said, gaining Merida's attention once more. "I am going to get right to the point and not "beat around the bush" because I can see that you are an intelligent young lady and you deserve to be treated as such."

'\_I'm liking her more and more'\_ Merida thought as she smile to herself.

"Merida, we have been informed of your condition and we understand that because of this you feel uncertain about going to Hogwarts."

"You understand?" Merida said, quickly growing angry. "What do you understand, about anything?"

"Merida!" Her mother scolded her, but Merida wasn't going to hear it. She stood up and ran back outside to the old swing set where she sat down facing away from the house.

Merida couldn't believe them. How could they understand what she is going through? Were they werewolves? Did the fear of hurting their own loved ones, their family, live in their hearts every day? Did they have to go through a pain transformation every month? No, they did not. They had no right to pretend that they understood and Merida was not going to listen to them make assumptions about how she was feeling.

It was not long before she heard someone approach from the house.

"I am not going back inside, Mother" Merida angrily spat at whom she believed was her mother behind her. She did not want to talk to her or to that McGonagall woman.

"That's fine."

Merida looked behind her shocked that it was not in fact her mother but the man, Remus Lupin, who has been silent until now.

"May I sit?" He asked her, gesturing to the swing next to her.

Merida looked at him for a moment before nodding. Remus Lupin sat down next to her and she went back to brooding as she slowly started to swing back and forth. Merida was not quite sure what to expect from this Remus Lupin, who looked tired and worn down. Whose eyes were so familiar and deep and made her feel like she was looking into a mirror. Professor McGonagall was a very straightforward woman, much like her mother, and Merida was somewhat familiar with that personality. However, this man was very calm and quiet, the complete opposite of Merida's father, so she didn't know what to expect from this man.

They sat like that for a long time. Merida would occasionally look over at him but he would be staring off into the woods at the other end of the yard. Merida felt calm in his presence and she was feeling less angry with her mother and Professor McGonagall. They had been sitting there for about half an hour before Merida got curious about the man beside her.

"Why are you here?" She bluntly asked him. He laughed and then shrugged.

"To be honest I didn't expect McGonagall to come to me asking for help to convince a kid to attend Hogwarts. Most kids jump at the chance to go to a magical school, so I was a bit shocked about that and the fact that she wanted me to help her."

"So you don't work for the school?" Did they just pick some random man for this recruiting job? Didn't her mother say something about him being an old friend of hers? Did that have something to do with why he was here?

"That'll be the day!" Remus laughed tilting his head back to look at the sky, "Professor Lupin! I can think of a few people who would find

that rather hilarious."

"Soâ€¦if you don't work for the schoolâ€¦what are you doing here?"

"I suppose you could say," Remus started, "that I am here to help you make your decision."

Merida almost scoffed at him but she decided that she has been rude enough already and that it might be worth it to hear this man out. Besides, she was tired of storming off and she'd rather just sit and sulk than out effort into making a show of it.

"Merida," Remus looked at her but Merida turned away. She couldn't bring herself to look him in the eye for some reason.

Remus sighed, "I understand that you are frustrated and angry about what is going on. You don't trust anyone, or yourself, and you don't see any good anymore and feeling any hope for the future almost feels like a crime."

Merida turned to him and was stunned. How did he know? Merida voiced her thoughts to the man in front of her and gave her a smile.

"Because that's how I felt when I was your age and received my Hogwarts letter."

Merida stared at him in shock. \_'Does that mean- could he be like me?''\_

"I was so frightened that I would not be able to control myself that I turned down the offer right away." Lupin continued as if he could read her mind. "Then, when a Hogwarts official came to my house they somehow convinced me to attend the school. It was hard to make that decision and takes a great amount of guts, but I'm glad that I was brave enough to go through with it."

Merida looked Remus over again. She looked at his slumped shoulders, his shaggy hair, and the faint scars on his face. And she looked deeper into his tired, old eyes. Eyes that have seen far more than she has ever dreamt of. Yet they were eyes that mirrored her own and she saw herself in them.

"How old were you when you were bitten?" She asked him.

"I was almost five." He replied.

'\_He was a werewolf far longer than I am now when he went to Hogwarts. He probably had more control than I do.'\_

"Did you learn to control it before you went to Hogwarts?" Merida voiced her concerns, uncertain of what answer she wanted.

"I still have difficulty controlling my wolf urges even now." Remus told her flatly.

Merida looked at the ground. \_'So even if I did go to the school I would probably have stay away from everyone else. The teachers would have to lock me in the dungeons with chains and collars. I would

never be allowed near the other students.'\_

"However," Remus's voice broke her out of her thoughts, "The time I spent at school was when I had the most control of myself."

"Really?"

"Really." Remus answered her with a smile. "The Headmaster of Hogwarts, Albus Dumbledore and a few other teachers set up an old shack for me that had a tunnel that connected it to the school. I would go there on the night of the full moon and take a bottle of Wolfsbane to keep my mind present. I would stay there the night and a teacher would come get me in the morning. Later, when I was older I would go into the large forest that is behind the school. Those nights were lonely but my friends helped me through the tough bits and kept me positive."

"You made friends?" Merida was astonished about this piece of information. The very thought that maybe, just maybe, she could be like a normal kid and have friends and have fun made her fill herself up with hope.

"More than I knew what to do with. They eventually discovered my secret and accepted me anyways; they didn't treat me any different. They treated me like a normal person and didn't force any standards onto me. "

"But how can you be sure that \_I\_ could find friends like those?"

"There is no true way of really knowing, Merida. It took time for me to truly feel comfortable around my peers to approach them, but I'm thankful I did. If it were not for James and Peter, I would have given up on myself a long time ago. It takes courage to make friends, but I believe you are brave enough to seek it."

"You really think so?" Merida asked Lupin. It was quite astonishing to her, meeting him. She had never even thought that a Werewolf like Lupin existed; \_could \_exist, for that matter. Mor'du was cruel and his words were like poison. Merida will never get it that voice out of his head She has never met another Werewolf that was so kind and spoke so gently with her or even an adult, in general, that spoke to her with such respect and \_NOT \_like she was a baby that could not understand what was happening. Lupin made Merida feel like she was once again in control of her own life.

"I know so. And, if you have trouble making friends at first, I am just an owl away." Lupin said as he leaned in, a delighted twinkle in his eyes.

"Really?" Merida asked excitedly.

"Really."

It was later that night, after Professor McGonagall and Lupin had left, that Merida announced proudly and loudly that she would be attending Hogwarts. Her Father had swept her into his large arms and they paraded around the kitchen table whilst her Mother was trying to get them to calm down, but not even really trying because this was

the brightest smile she has seen her daughters face since the bite.

Merida was of course still scared out of her bloody mind. But because of the confidence and faith bestowed upon her by Lupin, she was determined to not let it get the best of her. Merida had a mission, a mission that she and she alone had to complete. To show the world that she was not a victim of a bite. To show Hogwarts that there were more to werewolves than meets the eye.

To show herself that it was time for something new, something better.

That is was time for something different.

~(TO BE CONTINUED)~

**\*\*A/N YEAH! YOU GO GIRL!\*\***

**\*\*So my plan in the beginning of the story was to have background chapters for all of the characters. However, I feel that from a plot standpoint it would flow better if for Hiccup and Rapunzel I slowly integrate their back-stories. So Jack and Merida are going to be the only characters with point of views and their chapters will change between them randomly. There may be times where I WILL use a Hiccup or a Rapunzel POV if it fits best with the plot. But mainly it will be Jack and Merida. \*\***

**\*\*Okay! I love you all! Please review. You can literally write anything and I will love you. Tell me your opinions of the story, any ideas you have or things you would like to see, or just if you want to tell me how much you love this story!\*\***

**\*\*Next chapter we going to be going back to Jackie Jack! AWWWW Yeahhhh.\*\***

**\*\*Love ya,\*\***

**\*\*Bethany\*\***

End  
file.